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JOSEPHINE, EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH.

1922

Josephine Empress of the French

by Frederick A. Ober

Illustrated

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JOSEPHINE.

CHAPTER I.

ISLAND OF MARTINIQUE.

A TROPICAL morning of the year 1762.

As the sun rose from the Atlantic, he found a green and rugged island interposed between himself and the Caribbean Sea: a chain of wrinkled hills, with summits wreathed in vapory clouds. This verdant mountain-mass was Martinique, one of the fairest of those many isles that lie, crescent-like, between the ocean of storms and sea of calms.

One day far distant, in the age of fire, it had been upheaved from slimy ocean-depths; its primal rocks for centuries had been beaten upon by tropic sun, and washed in torrential rains; slowly, during eons of time it had gathered the garment of verdure now enwrapping it. Heat and moisture, the great alchemists, had combined to prepare its soil for the reception and retention of the seeds and germs of plant-life, brought hither by birds, by the winds that swept its surface. Thus the deep and gloomy

valleys, the sloping hillsides, even the mountain-summits, were covered with carpets of emerald embossed with flowers and trees.

How many ages it lay there, desolate, between shining sea and gloomy ocean,—who can tell? No one knows when the primogenial life began :—the first flutter of wings, the primitive pulse-beat of sentient organisms. . . . But one day this paradise was invaded by aboriginal man, who may have reached it drifting upon a giant tree, wrenched from some forest by the hurricane, or in a rude canoe, hewn from cedar or ceiba.

We have reasons for believing that he came from the south, from the region of the Orinoco, or the Amazons ; but we only know that this man found by Europeans in possession of the Caribbees, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, was of a type then unknown in the Old World, and called Indian.

Columbus found here, in the last decade of that century which gave America into the keeping of civilized man, the Carib cannibals. So fierce were these barbarous Indians, so warlike, so active in the defense of their homes and hunting-grounds, that for many years after the so-called discovery, the island remained in their possession. Then the French adventurers colonized it : the sea-rovers and buccaneers, attracted by the beauty and fertility of the island. The Caribs were gradually driven back from the coast-lands to the mountain valleys, finally disappearing altogether. The French planters prospered, their estates covered the lowlands ; their



Map of the Caribbean Sea.

slaves, imported from Africa, multiplied to a great population; their prosperity attracted the attentionof their enemies. . . . During that long and bloody struggle for supremacy between France and England, their colonial possessions suffered infinitely more than the home countries. The scene of conflict was shifted from sea to sea, from ocean to ocean. Finally, having already colonized or taken by force many of the choicest Caribbean islands, the English fell upon Martinique.

It was too rich a country to escape their clutches; their fleet approached its shores; the whole island was alarmed; planters and slaves, alike animated by patriotic sentiment, hastened to its defense.

A morning in January, 1762. . . . Upon the summit of a hill overlooking the deep bay of Fort Royal, stood a fair and delicate woman about twenty-five years of age. She was the center of a group of female slaves, who were regarding, as anxiously as she, the scene spread out before them. The deep valley at their feet was filled with shadows; a peaked *morne* cast its black counterpart across the intervening vale, and aslant the hill on which they stood. The morning air was cool and sweet; it breathed of naught but peace; yet, across the bay, less than four miles away, arose the smoke of conflict. The English fleet had approached the shore; the grim walls of Fort Saint-Louis, bristling with guns, were sending forth a storm of shot; boats from the fleet were striving for a landing. At first they were repelled by the gallant islanders, but

eventually were successful. Then the great wooden ships, hitherto silent, replied to the cannonade from the fort, and a pall of smoke hid the scene from view.

The white watcher fell to the ground and covered her eyes with her hands; her servants gathered around her. Silent and trembling, they awaited the lifting of the cloud that hid the fort. An hour passed, and another; the shadows shortened on the hill; a faint sea-breeze drifted by them. The cannonading had ceased, the cloud of smoke was dissipated by the breeze. The woman rose to her feet and strove to penetrate the mists that still clung about the farther hills. She started, gasped, looked again, and then fell into the supporting arms of her attendants. . . .

Above the fort no longer waved the Lilies of France!

Slowly and sorrowfully the little group descended the hill, to the plantation-house at its foot, there to await such tidings as the day might bring to them.

A bride of but little more than a month, Madame Tascher de La-Pagerie had been compelled to part from her husband a week previous to the battle, when he was ordered to assist at the defense of the Fort. As a lieutenant of the forces, he could not evade his duty to the government; loyal and patriotic, he yet left his bride with reluctance, and answered the imperative call to arms.

He had sent daily messages to her as he directed the erection of earthworks behind the town, scarped

the hillsides commanding the bay ; but for the last two days no messenger had been able to reach the plantation, isolated as it was among the hills, and beyond the bay swept by the guns of the enemy.

Though almost overborne by her grief and anxiety, Madame Tascher could not yield to her desire for seclusion, but was obliged to attend to the affairs of the large plantation, with its dependent slaves. Two days had nearly passed, the second was nearing its close, when the mistress of La-Pagerie saw a negro riding up the palm-bordered avenue from the landing at the bay. Standing in the southern doorway, above the rose-garden, she saw behind this horseman another, coming at a furious rate ; and a few minutes later was sobbing on her husband's breast.

The fight had ended, with victory for the English ; the planters were dispersing to their homes ; and Lieutenant Tascher, who had acquitted himself so bravely as to win the esteem of the English commander, was permitted to return to his estate.

Finding the demands of his large properties sufficient to occupy all his time, Lieutenant Tascher resigned his commission and devoted himself entirely to agricultural occupations. His principal estate was this on which he and his bride had taken up their abode, and which had come to them as her dower : the beautiful valley of Sannois near the little hamlet of Trois-Ilets. Acres unsurveyed lay spread out upon the hills adjacent : the valley itself penetrated far into the interior. All within sight

of their house was theirs, stretching from the quiet waters of the bay to the crests of the distant hills.

Not only the soil belonged to them, but the entire population of one hundred and fifty slaves. Here they lived happily surrounded by their dependants, over whom they exercised a beneficent sway, and entertaining their friends, when they chanced to visit from the near town of Fort Royal, and the farther city of St. Pierre.

Two happy and peaceful years followed the capture of the island by the English. In the cultivation of his vast estate, with its billowy fields of sugar-cane and fragrant groves of coffee-trees, M. Tascher passed his time, outwardly tranquil, but inwardly disturbed by the thought that he and his family were the subjects of an alien government. His father, the first of the name in America, had come to this island of Martinique in the year 1726. He was a personage of rank, as appears from his request, four years later, for the registration of his letters of nobility; a formality which the French noblemen coming to the Antilles never omitted.

His request was granted, but not until 1745, and meanwhile he had been united in marriage to Mlle. de La Chevalerie, the daughter of a wealthy family of the island.

A son was born to them, Joseph Gaspard de La-Pagerie, whom they sent to be educated in France. This young man returned to Martinique in 1755, was appointed First Lieutenant of Artillery, and actively engaged in the erection of batteries at Fort Royal,

the chief port and naval station of the French West Indies. He aided in a repulse of an English force under General Moore, in 1759, and (as we have already seen) took an active part in the defense of Fort Royal during the second assault, in 1762.

Following the example of his illustrious father, he formed an alliance with a rich Creole family, in November, 1761, by marriage with Mlle. Rose-Clair des Vergers de Sannois. Through her he came into possession of the estate of Sannois, to which he retired at about the age of twenty-seven, there to reside the remainder of his life.*

Absorbed as this happy couple became in the multitudinous cares of the "great-house" (as the dwelling of a West Indian proprietor is called) and the acres adjacent, they yet perpetually recurred to the one irritant of their otherwise placid existence: the floating of a foreign flag above the Fort.

As devoted children and lovers of La belle France, their existence was embittered by this reflection: that their children, should they be blest with any, would be born beneath an alien flag.

Fortune, however, still continued favoring: there came a day when M. Tascher was made supremely happy by the intelligence that a daughter had been born to him. And, coincident with this announcement, came the faint report of cannon, from across the bay. Fort Royal was rejoicing over the recession of Martinique.

* Histoire de la Martinique.

* See Appendix I.

Then the cloud lifted from the planter's brow,
for his daughter was a child of France!

NOTE.—Martinique lies between the 14th and 15th degree of latitude, north ; is about 45 miles long by 15 broad, with an area of 380 miles. It was discovered by Columbus, in 1502, inhabited by Indians who called the Island Madiana. The French colonized it in 1635. The British seized it in the years 1762, '81, '94, and in 1809 ; but it was finally restored by the treaty of Paris, 1814. Slavery was abolished in 1848, and the bulk of the present population is black or colored. It was the naval station and rendezvous of the French, during the American revolution.



Map of the Island of Martinique.

CHAPTER II.

HER FIRST DECADE.

THIS daughter of the Creole planter, whose birth was thus auspiciously announced by the salvos of returning peace, was none other than she who subsequently became celebrated as JOSEPHINE.

The treaty of peace, by which Martinique, amongst other colonial possessions, had been restored to France, was signed on the twelfth of February, 1763. A war-ship brought the news to Fort Royal; the final transfer of troops and the installation of the new governor took place in June, on the twenty-third of which month Josephine was born. The planter and his wife desired a son, and to veil their disappointment they bestowed upon the new arrival the name so honorably borne by the father and grandfather. The child was christened Marie-Joseph-Rose, thus combining and perpetuating the baptismal names of her grandfather, grandmother, father and mother:—Marie-Joseph-Rose-Tascher de La-Pagerie. This formidable appellation was soon abbreviated to Josephine, around which have since clustered all synonyms for grace and winsomeness.

Six years later, on the island of Corsica, was born

one with whom the name of Josephine is inseparably linked :—NAPOLEON.

Napoleon and Josephine : we cannot but pause a moment to note the parallelisms in the great events of their lives.

Both were island-born ; the one in a rock-ribbed isle of the Mediterranean, the other in a tropic segment of the Caribbean crescent.

Both first saw the light soon after the accession of their native land to France ; and both have been wrongfully accused of being but the adopted children of that country.*

Both early sought the shores of the mother-land ; but both ever retained their love for the place of their birth, returning to it when in trouble, and maintaining an affection for its people.

Their happiest years were those of their youth and passed in the retreats of nature, free from strife and turmoil. To them they constantly recurred, with longing and in loving remembrance ; but, urged by ambition, they pursued a course counter to the dictates of their affections.

Each was twice married, once for love, once to gratify ambition.

To the last, each retained the other in esteem, despite the estrangement of their latter years.

But to return to that eventful day, the twenty-

* Corsica was annexed to France in June, 1769 ; Napoleon born 15th of August, that year.



Birthplace of Josephine.

third of June, 1763. Joy and gladness filled the hearts of the planter and his wife. Writing to her sister, a week later, Madame de La-Pagerie expressed her great gratitude to God for "His gift of a daughter," and hoped the child would possess all the most agreeable traits of both ancestral families. That her desires were gratified, at least in this regard, history has assured us; no more loving and winsome infant, later developing into a graceful and sympathetic girl and mother, ever gladdened the hearts of hopeful parents.

The Creole nature is one of complaisance; yet, the surroundings of a child of wealthy parents, in those days of slavery, were not conducive to deferential deportment. Slave women waited on the child from birth, their children were also at its service night and day.

Hereditary influences and climatic conditions conduced to shape the little Creole into a perfect type of her class. She was unfettered by clothes and unrestrained by commands. As the tropical sun evokes from the soil an exuberance of vegetation to which the colder regions are strangers, so, too, the solar energy manifests itself in the ardency of the human temperament.

The Creole is more volatile, less restrained, more passionate, and given to lighter play of fancy, than the dweller at the North. And this quality is more than temperamental: it is physical, also.

The Creole (that is, the descendant of Europeans born in the Tropics) has a delicacy of figure and

litheness of limb, a grace and freedom of movement, that compensates for the loss of robustness and perhaps of virility. Free from the restraints of clothing, in earliest youth, the body develops along natural lines and the limbs become models of symmetry.

Such a "child of the sun," a creature of love, laughter, and careless gayety, was the youthful Josephine. As soon as she could walk outside the doors of the "great house" she became the favorite companion of the slave-children, who swarmed about the establishment. Or, rather, they became her devoted adherents, guiding her footsteps, watching over her every movement. She was really a queen before she could talk, an empress in fact before she ever saw the shores of France. Accustomed to have her lightest fancy taken seriously, to have her orders obeyed as soon as uttered, she was in danger of becoming imperious and selfish. Only her native sweetness saved her: the innate and surpassing graciousness of her disposition.

There is a tradition of a sister, a year older than herself; but the records of the little church where she was baptized do not confirm it. At all events, she had no sisterly companion with whom to join in play, and was chiefly thrown upon the resources afforded by the colored children about the place.

There was freedom enough: room enough in which to expand, to develop, to indulge in romp or ramble.

The planter's house was situated upon a natural

terrace, escarped from the side of a steep hill. Behind it rose the hills that swung around the head of the valley and cut off the view in that direction. But in front, the ground sloped towards the sea, to which led a broad and straight avenue of magnificent palms. Their trunks straight as arrows, and over one hundred feet in height; their verdant crowns interlaced above the road.

Between the house and the palm-avenue lay the rose-garden, filled with plants that bloomed perpetually; their fragrance invaded and made delightful the atmosphere of the dwelling.

A fruit-garden rambled around the outer edge of this paradise of roses, straggled over the slopes, and finally lost itself in the depths of the valley, out of which tumbled a brawling stream. In the dry season this stream was a mere babbling brook, drawing its thread of silver over the broad and rocky bed; when the rains came it fumed and roared, fighting its way between the tree-trunks and carrying some of them off with it to the sea.

When in its normal condition it held many a peaceful pool in its embrace, rambling from one to another with the freedom of a true tropical lover. One of these pools was early selected by Josephine's mother as her bathing-place. It lay beneath a giant *ceiba* tree, a silk-cotton, whose buttressed trunk reached out into it, and above it spread its canopy of verdant foliage.

The glorious palms and the silk-cottons were the Titans of this tropical world in miniature, towering

so high above their fellows that all others were dwarfed by comparison. Beneath them grew the mango and guava, the custard-apple, sapote, banana, orange, plantain, calabash, and a hundred others. Fruits were in abundance, all the year through. The golden-fruited mango shaded the veranda and dropped its delicious morsels for the little girl to find. The same tree, or one of its descendants, still casts its shade over the ground where Josephine played with her companions. On the hill-slopes gleamed the yellow cane, in the gorges grew the glossy-leaved coffee, with its crimson fruit. Tangles of vine and serpentine *liane* made barriers at the mouths of the ravines and hung their festoons around the trees.

But this Happy Valley was not without its evil things; beneath the luxuriant growth of vine and shrub lurked many dangers. Within the house itself were venomous insects, hiding beneath the floors, in holes and corners. There was always danger of disturbing an enormous centipede, with its numerous feet, its scaly back and poisonous mandibles. This island is its peculiar haunt, and here it attains to a length of many inches. Rapid of movement as anything that crawls, it flashes upon your sight an instant, then is gone. It hides in your clothing, and if disturbed pricks its poison into your flesh, leaving behind a burning fever. Or the tarantula, which here is surcharged with venom, and is found so large that its hairy legs can spread across a saucer. Scorpions, too,

share with the centipedes the soft and rotting wood, and hide beneath chips, dead leaves and even cast-off clothing. Ants in great variety, some of them capable of inflicting burning stings, some invading the house in hordes of millions. Great house-spiders, harmless but hideous; bats as large as doves, but not so innocent of harmful intent; chigoes, minute insects that penetrate the flesh and lay eggs therein that develop into festering sores; the *bête-rouge*, a kind of tick, that fastens upon the skin and buries its head in the flesh. These are the worst of the plagues with which a tropical country is infested; but mere mention of them will show how many are the dangers to which an infant is exposed. Even the carefully-nurtured child of wealth cannot wholly escape some annoyance, and the children of the lower classes are frequently stung and bitten.

Contempt is the child of familiarity, and the frequency with which such pests are seen divests them of the terror they might otherwise inspire. But there is one disturber of the peace in Martinique which is not only carefully avoided, but feared. This is the poisonous serpent, called the *Fer-de-Lance*. It is aggressive and venomous, and though its home is in the forest, yet it frequently descends to the gardens, and even enters the dwellings. Ever since the island has been in possession of the white man, this serpent has been a terror and scourge. It invades the cane-fields, where it strikes down the negro-laborer; suspends itself from limbs of trees

that stretch above the forest-paths; lies in wait for its victims in every conceivable situation. Except within the cities, where the streets are lighted, there is no stir of human life in this tropical island, after the shades of night have fallen. Imagine, then, the monotony of existence on a plantation, where the family seek repose soon after dark; where books are scarce; to which the newspaper rarely penetrates.

The span of child-life is the daytime; the waking hours filled with boisterous play, the night with sleep. To the child, then, the monotony of plantation-life would not seem depressing.

* See Appendix II.

CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT HURRICANE.

"I ran, I jumped, I danced, from morning to night; no one restrained the wild movements of my childhood."

These are the words of Josephine herself, recurring in later years to the happiest period of her life: the first decade of her child-life at Sannois-de-la-Pagerie.

With the earliest dawn of day she was out of her couch and in the open air. The great room in which she slept, with its bare white walls and tiled floor, was occupied conjointly with her favorite nurse, Adée, who was tireless in her efforts to please and protect her little charge. Adée was one of those golden-skinned products of tropical Martinique, a *métise*, with purple tints in hair and melancholy eyes, and the hues of sun-ripened fruit in her complexion. She was tall and lithe, young, joyous, and loving. Her lovers could be counted by the score; but not one of them could draw her away from "*'ti Josephine*," to whom she had vowed devotion to the death.

One of those delicious mornings, to experience

which is the joy of a lifetime, Josephine opened her eyes to see her good nurse bending over her. She was that day three years old, and a little *fête* had been arranged in celebration of such an important event. It was the custom, among the planters of that time, to perform some act, or make some sacrifice, that should cause the birthdays of their children to be remembered. On this occasion M. Tascher had promised to give his daughter an unusual happiness: in honor of her birthday he had promised to free one of the slaves.

It was with the recollection of her father's promise, that she opened her eyes and looked up questioningly into the face of her nurse. "Is it lovely? Is the sun shining?" she asked.

"Of course it is, *petit fi!* it is always shining; but——"

"But?" repeated Josephine, anxiously. "It *must* shine; to-day little Jo-jo is to be made free. Papa has given him to me."

"Yes, *ma chère*," said the girl, imprinting a kiss on the ripe lips, which Josephine unconsciously returned; "but I saw a bad-looking cloud in the sky, as I went out to feed the doves, and the hurricane-birds were flying low over the bay. But roll out, now, let me put on the new frock from the Fort. Ah, how lovely she will look; come now, to the bath."

The little pink feet pattered across the marble tiles, to the bath-room, where the sweet water from the hills, *l'eau douce*, was gurgling in the basin,

and soon their owner was laughing and plashing, to the music of the stream. The nurse's face wore an anxious expression, but with sweet gravity she attended upon the child, now and then casting a look towards the window opening upon the bay. Suddenly the door of the chamber was opened, and M. Tascher appeared. He cast a hurried glance around, and then, seeing the ones he sought, he seized a large bath-towel, threw it around his daughter, and gathering her into his arms, pressed her to his breast, kissing her passionately.

"Quick, Adée, follow me with what you can find at hand. To the *case-a-vent* : to the hurricane-house ; lose not a moment ; the hurricane is upon us. Madame is already there." *

The quick ears of Adée had already caught the premonitory mutterings of the coming storm ; but she had hoped to finish the child's toilet without alarming her. Gathering into her arms some articles of clothing scattered on the floor, she hastened after her master, who had crossed the enclosure behind the dwelling, and was at the entrance of the hurricane-house.

The *case-a-vent*, or hurricane-house, was an indispensable adjunct of every plantation in the island,

* The author is indebted for this narrative, to the traditions of Trois-Ilets.

The great hurricane, which destroyed the property of M. Tascher, and devastated the island, occurred the 13th August, 1766, some seven weeks after Josephine's third birthday. See Appendix (3) and "*Histoire Générale des Antilles.*"

subject as it was to those terrible storms called by the first Indians, *ouragans*, and which have made desolate many a fair and prosperous estate.

It is usually built into or under the side of a hill, with walls of stone several feet in thickness, and, as far as possible, in a sheltered situation. The door is of thick plank, there are no windows ; and, as may be imagined, the air within, if the storm be of long duration, is most oppressive.

Not too soon had the family of M. Tascher sought and gained the shelter of the cave under the hill. Scarcely had the last servant been drawn within and the massive door closed and bolted, than the hurricane was upon them in all its fury. The tall palms writhed and bent beneath its blows ; mango and calabash, orange and guava trees were quickly stripped of their limbs ; roof-tiles from the mansion, boards from the negro-quarters, and branches wrenched from trees, were hurled through the air.

The door of the *case-a-vent* groaned on its huge hinges, strained at the iron bars across it, almost burst its fastenings. The air within the cave became hot to suffocation ; moans and cries arose from the terrified servants ; but little Josephine uttered not a word. Close clasping her arms around her father's neck, and clinging also to her mother's hand, she lay quiet and calm. But within her tender bosom what tumultuous feelings struggled for expression ! . . . Her fête-day, it was to have been ; she was to have ruled the plantation as a

queen absolute; one of her subjects was to have been freed from the bonds of slavery; on every side there would have been joy and rejoicing. But now . . . Upon a sensitive organism like hers, what lasting impress would this scene and experience make! . . . With senses exquisitely attuned to the harmonies of nature, what a shock would be this dissonance!

Thus early in her sad life, she was brought face to face with the terror and despair of humanity. She must have been impressed with man's impotence; perhaps then was born her fatalism, her resignation to the inevitable, to which she clung in later years.

The hours passed slowly; but finally the door ceased to strain at its fastenings, and M. Tascher commanded the huge negro who had it in charge, to open it a little way. Carefully and slowly, the bolts were drawn and daylight admitted. All was quiet without. The darkness that had accompanied the storm, caused by the dense clouds and sheets of rain, had been dispelled by the sun, which was now shining brightly. A mighty sigh of relief arose from that imprisoned throng; but changed to cries of distress as the scene of desolation met their view.

The wind had died away to a moan; exhausted nature lay prostrate, torn and bleeding. Hardly a tree was left standing: huge ceibas, cedars, and sapote trees had been uprooted and cast to the ground. But the most mournful spectacle was of the palm-avenue, for in place of the columnar

trunks with their waving plumes, was a ragged row of shattered stumps, with here and there a few mangled leaves clinging to the stems. The huts of the negroes, which had been grouped around the sugar-mill, were entirely destroyed, and soon a hundred despairing beings were groping in their ruins.

All this scene of devastation M. Tascher took in at a glance; it somewhat prepared him for the crowning desolation of all: the total destruction of his house.*

A groan escaped him, as he looked upon what had been his happy home. In ruins; not a wall left standing; the rose-garden strewn with stones and tiles. From that moment the father of Josephine was a changed and broken man. Tall, alert, handsome, ever with a smile on his bronzed face, he had worked hopefully for his home and family; had built and improved; but now, all was swept away, the work of years, the improvements of a century.

He never rebuilt the great-house; for years after, the family lived in the upper rooms of the *sucrerie*, or sugar-house, where the cane was ground and converted into sugar.

His wife clung to his shoulders and little Josephine mutely appealed to be taken to his arms. Withdrawing his fixed gaze from the ruins, he looked absently at them a moment; then the consciousness

* "*M. de La Pagerie eut sa maison d'habitation entièrement ruinée; le bâtiment seul de sa sucrerie resta debout. C'est là qu'il se réfugia avec sa femme et Joséphine,*" etc., *Histoire de la Martinique.*



THE SUCRERIE.

of their continued presence came upon him and he clasped them to his breast. "My wife, my daughter; yes, thank the good God, *they* are left to me!"

With eyes blinded by tears, the unfortunates sought for some familiar scene; but all was changed. The river had burst its banks, had swept away their garden and many trees; but more than this: it had carried away some of their servants in the flood.

Only the great sugar-house remained standing, of all the buildings pertaining to the estate. To this structure the now homeless family directed their steps. Its walls were of stone, some two feet in thickness, its rafters heavy and covered with earthen tiles, the doorways were broad, with granite lintels. Above the ground-floor, where the machinery was placed: huge rollers to press the juice from the cane, great gloomy vats filled with water, an endless tramway for the carrying away of the cane-stalks; above this dark, cavern-like room were two large chambers. The beams supporting the floor were sound and strong, and the floor itself intact. To the chambers the negroes, obeying M. Tascher's orders, carried such of the furniture as they could find, such of the scattered clothing and valuables as could be collected, and there the family took up their abode. Fate, or fortune, so willed it that while she lived at Trois-Ilets, Josephine knew no other place of residence, unless visiting at the house of a friend, or at school.

Two dormer windows were thrown out towards the sea, the bare rafters were hung with draperies,

mats of rushes were strewn upon the floor, and the rooms made as habitable as possible.

The old building still stands (or it stood, a few years ago, when it was seen by the writer of these lines), a mute memorial of that scene of devastation of more than one hundred years ago. Nothing else remains to remind one of what transpired here when it was the home of the youthful empress. Of the great-house, only the kitchen was left standing, by the hurricane; the *ancienne cuisine*, as it is called to-day; this, too, still exists. The lover of Josephine, the traveler who may chance to reach this obscure valley, may still trace the outline of the great-house walls, and look upon the small structure that was once attached to it. Its walls are of stone, its roof of rich-hued tiles, lichen-covered. Above it droops a mango tree, dropping its golden fruit to-day, as in the century past, for the children playing beneath its shade. In this small building lived for many years the mother of Josephine, after the death of her husband, and even while her daughter was empress of France.

As the watchful Adée was carrying Josephine to the place in which they were to live, her attention was attracted by an object floating at the river-side. She halted, but, though shuddering with an undefined feeling of dread, she continued her way to the upper chamber, first leaving her charge with a servant, before returning to confirm her fears.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CARIB PROPHETESS.

HER fears were realized. Parting the guava bushes, peering through them fearfully, Adée saw the body of little Jo-jo, his hands grasping the guava roots, his glassy eyes looking up into the sky. "*Ah, pauv' garcon;* poor little Jo-jo; and yesterday he was to have been free!" Adée carefully drew the dead boy from the water, and took him to the negro camp, where his mother received him in stony silence. Hers was not the only bleeding heart in the valley of Sannois. A disaster so overwhelming, so universal, had reduced the usually boisterous negroes to despairing quietude. They gathered around the mother with mute offers of sympathy; one stretched out the contorted limbs, another went to the wrecked workshop and made him a casket of cedar wood; another dug a grave beneath the mango-tree above the ford. That evening they bore him gently to his rest beneath the fruited mango, all the slaves joining in the procession. Jo-jo had been the favorite playfellow of Josephine; he was a few years older than the white child, and grave and dignified beyond his age. Next to Adée, he had held a place in her heart, as one to be loved and trusted. Her first inquiry, after the noon-day siesta, was for

her companion. "Bring Jo-jo to me, Adée, I wish to tell him he is free. No fête, no flowers; only the big storm; but no matter; it was my birthday, was it not? And papa promised me Jo-jo. I wonder if he will leave us and his mamma, now he is free?"

"He has left already," said Adée, burying her head in her hands; "when you were sleeping, a good man came to take him away."

The child regarded her inquiringly. Her own nature was truthful; she believed in her nurse implicitly; but there was a veiled something in her words she could not understand. It seemed incredible that Jo-jo should have gone without bidding her farewell.

At last she said, calmly, with a suspicion of fear creeping around her heart: "Adée, who was the 'good man'; was it——"

"Ah, *ma chère* it was *le Bon Dié*;—the good Lord took little Jo-jo." The child clasped her hands, her tears flowing silently.

"Then, Adée,—then Jo-jo *is* free, is he not?"

"Yes, child; but do not think of it; better not; he is happy now. Come, come down with me to the bay. I will carry you." Adée forced herself to smile, singing a favorite song, which always captured the hearts of the little ones:—

> "Come, my darling, kiss your sweetheart;
> She will buy you fowl and rice;
> Come, my dearest, kiss your sweetheart."

Josephine rose submissively, and Adée took her to

the bay, wending her way through and over fallen tree-trunks, and the million fragments of their devastated home. There they found the fishermen assembled, bewailing the total loss of their boats and nets. The shore was strewn with wreckage, and multitudes of fish were lying on the sands and in the grass, where the storm had cast them.

The river-mouth was full of *titiri*, little fish so small that a hundred would scarce fill a teaspoon, but which, when fresh, are made into the most delicious of fish-cakes. The natives of the island have a tradition that the titiri only appear with the heats of the summer lightning, and they call the electric flashes of the storms in July and August, the "titiri lightnings": *z'eclarai-titiri*, which, they say, hatch the fish.

Then there was the "perroquet," or parakeet fish, with its bands of vivid yellow and red; the *cirurgien*, all blue and black; the *souri*, in pink and yellow; and finally, Adée pointed out the "*Bon-Diémanié-moi*," so-called by the fishermen: "the Good-God-handled-me," because it had finger-marks on each side its head.

By diverting the child in this manner, directing her attention to the manifold attractions spread out by nature, on every side, Adée restored her to her former self, and it was with composure that they returned to the shelter of the sugar-house.

After months and years of constant labor, M. Tascher succeeded in restoring to the devastated

plantation somewhat of its former aspect of exuberant fertility; but, though the ruins of the great-house were removed, and the hill-slopes replanted in coffee and cane, neither the giant trees nor the houses were replaced.

The struggle with nature was exhausting and depressing, for the elemental forces were difficult to control, and periodically burst their bounds, destroying in a day or a night what it had taken years to create. Thus the planter became the victim of gloom and depression, and his wife worn with the unceasing battle for life. Their great joy was their daughter. Year by year, Josephine grew in grace and beauty, developing into a sweet and thoughtful maiden; full of the tenderness, the gentle gravity, so characteristic of the high-born Creole.

At the age of ten she was almost arrived at woman's stature; not tall, but admirably proportioned, with a flexile, graceful figure; abundant hair crowned her shapely head; her hands and feet were so small and so beautiful that in after years Napoleon never ceased to admire them. Although sun-kissed and breeze-caressed, from her constant exercise in open air, yet her complexion was rich and delicately-tinted. In short, she was strong and healthy, agile and supple, with a mind as free from morbid thoughts or impulses as her body was from taint of disease, or physical defect.

Her nurse was still her companion; Adée had kept pace with her mistress in the development of physical charms, and was now a ripened Juno, the

envy of her female companions and the despair of would-be lovers. She guarded her as tenderly as during the first years of infancy, when she had been given into her charge by the mother. She was more than mother to her, since she gave her all her time, allowed her own rich life to be absorbed by the other. And Josephine repaid her devotion with love of equal measure ; she was her friend and confidante, not her servant. They were inseparable, they took long walks together, bathed in the same pool beneath the ceiba, sang and danced together.

It was during one of their long rambles late one afternoon, when they had penetrated into the valley farther than usual, that they had an adventure which made a great impression upon Josephine. They had followed the stream from the lower vale till it became a mere rivulet, and near its source, perched on the side-hill under a great *gommier* tree, saw a hut of palm and cane leaves. It was little more than an *ajoupa*, or sylvan hut, to exterior view ; but on close approach it revealed a substantial construction and unexpected amplitude within.

In front of the *ajoupa* sat a woman of some thirty-five years, beneath a bower of plantain leaves. Accompanying Josephine and her nurse was a girl from Trois-Ilets, or Fort Royal,—probably her father had a city house at the latter, and estate at the former *bourg*,—who was frequently her companion. She was a little older than Josephine, this young lady, Aimée Dubec de Rivery, and belonged to one of the oldest families of the island.

The proprietress of the hut invited them to enter, and they wonderingly accepted her invitation. She was a *Fille de Couleur*, of attractive appearance; a daughter of the people, born with all the inherited charms of the mingled blood of Carib, Negro and Caucasian. Her black eyes and hair had the purple tint bestowed by the Carib; her feet and hands also showed by their smallness and delicacy the aboriginal birthright. Her serpentine movements, the flowing curves of her figure, the silk-like smoothness of her richly-tinted skin, all proclaimed her a representative of the island's best and rarest type.*

She was clad in the holiday costume of the richest of her class, which revels in color and startling effects. On her head she wore a turban of gay "Madras,"—a mouchoir of brightest colors; her skirt or *douillette* was of violet silk; over her shoulders was a *foulard* or shoulder-scarf, of costly silk; and this, as well as the turban, was ornamented with gold brooches and "trembling-pins."

She appeared a veritable queen of the forest; but she was really a priestess of Obeah.

"You did not come for that purpose," she said to them, as they seated themselves upon wooden benches; "you did not come to have your fortunes prognosticated, but to-day they will be told you."

The girls shrank from her touch, as she ventured

* Josephine, when at Navarre, repeated this story, in substance, and it is given in various biographies of the Empress. Island tradition, however, makes the prophetess of Carib, rather than of African, descent.

to take their hands; but Adée, herself of the same class of mixed-bloods, reassured them and bade them not to be afraid.

"Why should you be afraid? It is a good fortune that I shall give to both of you. And first, you are both to be queens: yes, one of you will reign in France, the other in an Oriental harem."

This preposterous announcement at once restored their courage, and the girls entered with zest into the spirit of the occasion. "Yes," proceeded the sibyl, frowning at their levity, "good fortune will at first attend you both; each of you will make a long and stormy voyage; each will at first marry happily; but eventually one will be released by the death of her husband, the other will be captured by Algerian pirates and sold to the slavery of the Sultan of Turkey. She will acquire great influence with him, and her son will afterwards sit on the throne; but she will die miserably. "As for you," addressing Josephine, "as for you, it is written in the stars that you will become the bride of the greatest man the modern world has seen. No, he is not yet in the world's eye; his star will rise coincident with yours. But when yours sinks, then his also sets beneath the horizon. Go now; I have spoken; you do not believe me; but wait, wait yet twenty years."

The trembling girls departed, vainly striving to shake off the evil effect of this intercourse with the mysterious woman. Whether or not this prediction of the sibyl was ever uttered, the incident is found in the memoirs of the queen; it cannot be ignored.

Mademoiselle Aimée, was, it is said, subsequently captured by Algerian corsairs, sold to the Sultan, and became the mother of one of the numerous Mohammeds, or Selims, with whom Turkey has been cursed.

Silent and subdued, they pursued the valley path to the *sucrerie ;* the sun had set, the stars were out, behind them the Southern Cross stood still above the crest of a hill. A black bird swooped across their path, uttered a shrill shriek at sight of them, and disappeared. "*Bon Dié,*"* muttered Adée, crossing herself, "that was the *Diablotin.*"

* *Dié,* island patois for Dieu.

CHAPTER V.

AT DIAMOND ROCK.

THE *Diablotin*, or Devil-bird, has its home in the mountain, where, at the very summit, it burrows a hole for itself. More than two hundred years ago it was discovered, yet to-day it is as mysterious as ever. As night falls the lone dweller in the mountain valley, or the solitary fisherman drawing his net, hears a shriek, as of a despairing soul, sees a dusky figure sweep by him ; that is all. Then he crosses himself, saying : "The Devil-bird is a-wing, and I must seek a shelter." For days the apprehension of evil to befall will cling to him ; no more firmly does the Oriental believe in the malific virtue of the evil eye.

In reality, the Diablotin is a harmless bird, a species of petrel, its home in the mountain-top, its haunts over the turbulent sea. But Adée was firm in her conviction that something harmful would result from this chance meeting with the Devil-bird ; and when, that night, Madame La-Pagerie told her that it had been decided to send Josephine away to school, she felt her fears were verified.

"*O Yeyette mi*" (addressing Josephine by the pet name of the household), and throwing her arms

around her neck: "*Yeyette, ma fille*, you will not leave your dear Adée? What can the schools teach you? Do you not already know how to dance, to sing, to play the *tambou*, to embroider, to whistle like the birds, to run like the agouti? Never, never will you be so happy as you are now. Stay with us, Yeyette."

Madame La-Pagerie smiled sadly, but, untwining the arms of the loving pair, drew Josephine to her side and set before her the necessity of attending to her commands. "You are now a large girl, my darling, I have taught you all it is possible, encumbered as I am with the care of your two sisters; your education must be finished at the convent. It will not be a long separation, and besides you can return here every week, spending a day with us. Adée shall go with you and return with you, if you desire."

Her tears were flowing, for it cost her a great effort to part, even temporarily, from her eldest daughter. She had been so helpful to her: a womanly companion rather than a little child; yet withal so ready to engage in romp or frolic. Josephine said nothing, but kissed her mother submissively, and was led to her chamber by Adée, blinded by her tears. There the two wept together, and consoled each other with the assurance that the separation should not be for a long time, and that, the great scheme of education finished, Yeyette would return to live with them all her life.

There were two convents of repute in Martinique,

that of the Ursulines at St. Pierre, the farther city; and another, the "Dames de la Providence," at the near town of Fort Royal. Here lived Josephine's grandmother, with whom she resided while attending school at Fort Royal, and who cared for her as for her own child. The years passed rapidly; Josephine was an apt pupil and readily acquired all the nuns could teach her. At the age of fifteen she returned to her home at La-Pagerie, where she had spent the long vacations.

Her two sisters, Desirée and Marie, were then aged respectively about twelve and ten. During the years when they might have been her companions she was away at school; thus it was that Adée still held the place of elder sister in her affections. The faithless Adée, having been in a measure separated from the idol of her heart, had allowed one of her numerous admirers to capture and carry her away.

Released from school, Josephine hastened to rejoin the expectant family at La-Pagerie, and the day following the happy reunion an excursion was planned to the sea-valley behind the hills where Adée, now a matron and mother, was living with her husband.

She had sent invitation by special messenger, an old African, who had waited in order to guide the party over the hills. They started at daybreak: M. Tascher, grave but kindly, led the little procession mounted upon a Puerto-Rico pony; behind him, in hammocks of Cayenne grass slung between poles

carried by stout negro-laborers, were the daughters of the house of La-Pagerie, gay and laughing.

They took the valley path until it ended at a break in the hills, whence they descended towards the open sea. Hitherto in deep shade, owing to the early hour of their departure, the sun burst upon them at the hill-crest, illumining the blue ocean and gilding the spires, the mountain peaks, of the distant island of St. Lucia, where also M. Tascher had a plantation. The girls caught their breath at the beauty of the scene spread out before them, clapped their hands with joy at sight of the new world at their feet. Josephine was full of elation at the prospect of soon meeting with her devoted nurse. The cool morning breezes fanned her hair and cheeks, the gilt-crested humming-birds darted at her hammock and played around her head. Sweet odors of honeysuckle and frangipanni, jessamine and acacia, filled the air, and the birds, the wrens and *siffleurs*, caroled to her as she passed them by.

With a heart bursting with gladness and filled with thanksgivings, the girl reclined in her hammock, dreamily noting the shifting phases of the gliding panorama. The joyous slaves sang wild songs of their native Africa, their deep bassos reverberating in the gorges, as they swung along, happy in the service of their mistress. At the head of the procession, now descending the narrow trail in Indian file, strode the ancient African. He carried a small drum, or *tambou*, made by stretching a skin of some wild animal over the head of a hollowed log. As

the sea opened to their view he sent out a note of warning to the dwellers in the valley: "*Tam, tam, tam, tam, tam.*" It was heard and answered: "*Poum, poum, poum, poum.*" "*La calienda!*" shouted the hammock-bearers, "The dance, the African dance. Ah, we will have a good time, soon."

Thus, elated with anticipation of a feast and dance, the negroes hastened forward, and soon they had reached the shore, where the hills had drawn their feet away from the sea and left a curving beach, backed by fertile meadow and bordered with cocoa palms.

Beneath the palms was a collection of grass huts, with wattled sides and deep-thatched roofs, surrounded with gardens of tropical fruits. Here lived the freed negroes and colored people of that district, and, standing in the doorway of one of the newest of the huts, was the Junoesque figure of Adée. In her arms was an infant, a twelvemonth child, naked as a god, golden in hue as the boy the Guiana Indians offered to the king of El Dorado. With a loud cry of joy, she ran forward to welcome her darling Yeyette, casting the astonished infant into the hammock, and clasping the girl in her arms.

"*Ah, Yeyette mi,* my darling, light of my eyes, my heart's idol! Adée thought she would never see you again." They laughed and cried, holding each other close, and then at arm's length, gazing into eyes filled with tears of joy. When the

paroxysm had passed, Adée picked up the golden infant and led the way to her house. Her husband, another magnificent specimen of the mixed race, a brown-skinned Adonis, was introduced, and soon refreshments were brought the tired travelers. A little black boy climbed a cocoanut tree and cast down some "water-nuts," then descending, he clipped off the pointed end of each, leaving a small round hole, opening into the ivory geode, filled with sweetest water.

Drinking this clear nectar, they were refreshed, and after the hammocks were slung beneath the trees they all took a brief rest, after which the visitors were summoned to a straw-thatched pavilion, where, spread upon a table, was a banquet, prepared with all the luxuries of the Tropics. The air was perfumed with the fragrance of pine-apples, bananas, savory soups and delicious desserts. M. Tascher presided, his eldest daughter sat at his right hand, with her sisters opposite, while the happy Adée, her husband, and the prettiest girls in the hamlet, waited upon them. Breakfast having been served, and the attendants having disposed of their duties for the day, a short siesta was indulged in, after which all repaired to a near palm grove, to witness, and take part in, if so desirous, the dance of the day. Seated upon the ground, with a back-ground of netted *lianes*, was the aged African who had been their guide. He took a large *tambou* between his knees and began the preliminary call to the *calienda*:—*Poum, poum; tam-tam-tam, tam-poum!*"

The hollow sound rolled along the plain and through the woods, rising and falling, diminishing and swelling, with a weird and powerful effect. Billows of sound, deep muttering as of distant thunder, wild calls of night-birds, melancholy wailings of wandering spirits: all these seemed to be evoked from that skin-covered log. A peculiar quality of the tambou-roll is, that it traverses vast distances, penetrates great areas of forest, impelling the listener to seek out its source, to assemble with his brothers for the wild and savage calienda. Old "Fou-fou" (the Crazy-crazy) had acquired the art from an African ancestor, himself a great chief of a coast-tribe; and by means of the subtle, fascinating, and awe-inspiring thunder roll of the tambou, his royal forbear had often called his tribe to war.

Brought to America with the imported slaves, the tambou still supplies the negro with his simple music, supplemented sometimes by that evoked from calabash and gourd.

Not for many years had old Crazy-crazy had so distinguished an audience, and the presence of the master of Sannois, together with his charming daughters, inspired him to unprecedented feats of skill. The protesting tambou growled and groaned, howled and moaned, sent its wail afar and its muffled sighs deep into the earth.

"Hark!" cried Adée, "it is the voice of Pelée, the sigh of the demon-jombie, who lives in the crater-heart of the great volcano."

In truth, it seemed the very earth was trembling;

almost the awed listeners could fancy they heard the ominous mutterings of a coming earthquake, and they shuddered. For the earthquake was no stranger to the dwellers in Martinique.

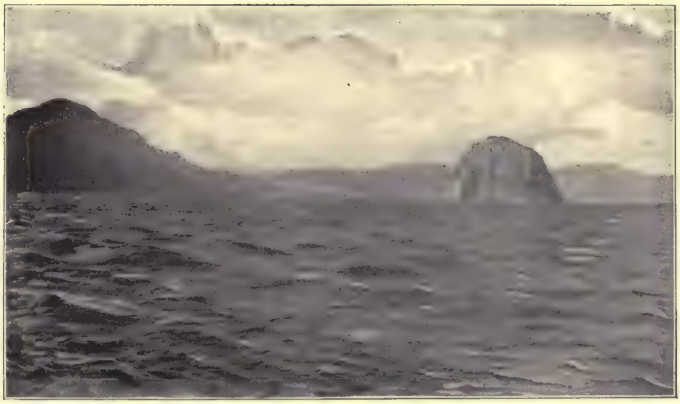
Then old Fou-fou sat astride the drum, tapping it with his finger-tips, caressing it with rapid passes of his hands, and now and then punishing it with a vicious kick of his naked heel. He broke into savage song, in the chorus of which the assembled negroes joined :—

"Oh, yoïe-yoïe ;
Oh, missé-ah,
Y bel tambouyé,
Aïe, ya, yaïe,
Joli Tambouyé."

The music ended in a prolonged roll, dying to a moan, a sigh, fainter and fainter, until lost in the forest-depths. The African fell from his drum prone upon the ground, and with a sigh of relief his auditors left him, seeking more cheerful entertainment.

Before the huts lay a crescent of sand, hot and glistering in the sun of midday ; but beginning to be cool in the shadows of the cliffs, as mid-afternoon was reached. The waves gently lapped its golden floor, inviting the children to wade in their foam, to embark upon their bosom.

Isolate in the waters of the bay, a mile away or so, rose a great rock, like a pyramid, and five hundred feet in height.



Diamond Rock.

"That is 'Diamond Rock,'" said M. Tascher, pointing to it: "*La Roche du Diamante.* Do not you remember, Yeyette, the story of its capture, by the English, some twenty years ago? When the French and English were at war, and when the fleets of both great powers were scouring these seas in search of prey, some of our smaller vessels used to escape the enemy by sailing between that rock and the mainland, thus reaching unharmed the port of Fort Royal, which is just behind that promontory. This occurred so frequently that the British commander, Lord Howe, vowed he would stop it, if it took all the sailors of his fleet. So he sent a midshipman there, with a picked body of men, who hoisted several guns to the summit of the rock, and who, for over a year, commanded the channel. We could not dislodge them, the rock is so steep, and they annoyed us exceedingly. But finally the English admiral sailed away and forgot them, and, as they were only provisioned for a limited time, they capitulated to our commander at the Fort. It is said that the rock was entered on the British Admiralty lists as 'His Majesty's Ship, Diamond-Rock,' and its brave defenders rated as the crew of a ship-of-war."

"*Ma foi!*" exclaimed Yeyette, "but they were brave men. How I should like to have met them! Cannot we go over to the rock?"

"Is it safe, Adée? Do your boats ever go there?"

"Yes, indeed. We can reach it in half an hour. Charles, get the canoe." A great canoe, hewn

from a huge *gommier* tree, was quickly brought around from the river, and into it they all climbed, with cries of joy. Three bronze sailors paddled so lustily that they were soon under the lee of the Rock, and shortly ashore, in a sheltered rift. There was not much to see at the marge, so Yeyette wished to climb the narrow path, which wound around the cliff like a thread.

"I don't think it would be safe," said Adée; "but we can go a little way. But have a care, my child; the rock is very steep."

"Never fear, but follow me," cried Yeyette, and she was already a hundred feet up the height before her father, who had been hidden behind a projecting rock, saw and shouted to her to descend.

She laughed and kissed her hand to him, but climbed breathlessly on. Half-way up, the trail abruptly ended; the rock had been dislodged in some earthquake. The shelf of rock upon which she stood was so narrow she could not turn, and glancing about her fearfully, she caught sight of the white waves, two hundred feet below, snarling at the base of the precipice. This sight made her dizzy; her head reeled, she would have fallen, had not Adée, who was close behind, quickly caught and steadied her. A moment, only, they hung above the white-fanged waves, leaping and gnawing at the rocks below; then, held in her nurse's arms, Josephine retreated to a broader ledge, where she recovered from her fright.

Sobered by this incident, she descended to join the

group below, and her father, having no words with which to rebuke her, folded her in his arms. Trembling in his embrace, her face hidden against his shoulder, Josephine then realized what a refuge and strength was this grave and tender parent, whose love was too deep for words, whose life was devoted entirely to her happiness.

The *canotiers* bore them swiftly to the beach, whence, after a brief tarry for refreshment, the planter and his daughters departed for their home. The sun had set beneath the waves ere they reached the hill-crests above La-Pagerie, and their descent was made in the dusk. But the villagers accompanied them with torches of fragrant *gommier* gum, which flickered and fitfully illumined the recesses of the woods, where the serpents lurked, and from which came out heavy perfumes of wild flowers and strange nocturnal noises. Old Fou-fou, who had recovered, marched at the head of the company ; the weird music of his *tambou* throbbed through the still air ; as it pulsated, all the night, through Josephine's journey in dream-land.

CHAPTER VI.

LA BELLE CREOLE.

"NATURE, rich and sumptuous, has covered our fields with a carpeting, which charms as well by the variety of its colors as its objects. She has strewn the banks of our rivers with flowers, and has planted the freshest forest around our fertile borders. . . I love to hide myself in the green woods that skirt our dwelling-place."

Thus wrote Josephine to a friend of her youth. She was unspoiled by society, untouched by the vanities of the world. She was a child of nature: everything around her, sentient or inanimate, contributed to her enjoyment. If we were to look ahead of our narrative some twenty years, and transfer our view to Malmaison, that retreat in France to which she hastened at every opportunity when she could escape the cares of the court, and where she finally passed her closing days,—we should find ample evidence that her love for nature was yet strong within her. When she went to France, either on her first or second voyage, she took with her such specimens of the plants around La-Pagerie as were endeared to her by the perfumes of their flowers, or to which she was attached from

sentimental associations. "The gardens of Malmaison, during her lifetime, resembled a veritable Eden. It was her daily habit to visit her exotic plants, to watch over and water them ; and these she called her 'great family,' displaying the most intimate knowledge of their life, history and names, and sometimes playfully rallying the Emperor (Napoleon) upon his ignorance of botany." From every source, she received presents of rare plants ; but that which was particularly endeared to her was one she herself had carried to France,—the *amaryllis gigantea*, and which attracted great attention, from the beauty and fragrance of its flowers. This royal plant grew in profusion around La-Pagerie ; and a thousand others adorned the slopes of the hills and bordered the stream flowing past the *sucrerie*.

After her conventual life at Fort Royal, with now and then a dip into the placid waters of the society gathered at the Capital, her residence at the plantation might have seemed monotonous ; but there is no evidence of this in the imperfect records of this period of her youth. Hers was a healthy and exceptionally happy nature, with no craving for what was hidden from her view, and no yearning after the presumably unattainable. It is in seclusion such as that in which her youth was passed, that the greatest men and women have been nurtured. Nature is a generous mother to those who will but cast themselves upon her bosom and imbibe from her primeval fonts. Without the distractions of the city, with no dissipating demands from

society, nature's children devote their time to adding to their knowledge of the things immediately about them, to widening their powers of observation,—in truth, to becoming acquainted with the great and primal facts, the eternal verities. All knowledge is cumulative; during long centuries, nature had been writing her book, for this child to read. During generations past and preceding, her ancestors had gathered to themselves the best about them, and had transmitted to her the increment. In her, first, their rich and generous lives found expression: Josephine was their Amaranth. It was this strong hold on nature, this stability derived from a virile ancestry, that enabled Josephine to withstand the assaults of innumerable foes, during the period of the Revolution, the Directory, and the Imperial régime.

At fifteen years of age, Josephine had fulfilled all the expectations of those who had watched the budding charms of her infancy and childhood. The bud had opened into bloom of rarest worth; the heart of the rose was not more sweet and fragrant than her fresh loveliness. Like the flowers around her, she bloomed for the delectation of those who might behold her beauty. Like them, also, she was unconscious of her loveliness, which displayed itself in her grace of manner as well as in purely physical symmetry.

The slaves were all devoted to her, and vied with one another in her praise. "*Toujour content, toujour joyeuse,*" she flitted in and out their humble

cabins, an angel of mercy to the old and decrepit, a joyous spirit to the young, as well.

The fame of "*La Belle Creole,*" was not confined to the island-bounds but extended across the seas, to France, where her aunt, Madame Renaudine, resided, and who insisted that her niece should join her there. There is no evidence to show that Josephine was desirous, at first, of going to France, but much to indicate her great unwillingness. Her mother, having in mind her future, and knowing only too well the terrible cares and responsibilities of plantation life, was most favorably impressed with the invitation from the aunt, and soon undertook to prepare her daughter for the voyage.

She was not cold nor calculating; but she may have taken heed to the aunt's suggestion that it was time for her niece to marry, and that she had already selected a worthy companion for her, in the person of young Beauharnais. . . The records of the parish church of Saint Louis, at Fort Royal, show that there was baptized there, in June, 1760, an infant born the month preceding, upon whom was bestowed the name of Alexandre de Beauharnais. Josephine's aunt, Madame Renaudine, was this infant's godmother, and later, in France, became the wife of the Marquis de Beauharnais, the child's father.

The Marquis de Beauharnais, then acting as governor of Martinique, left for France the following year, but his son was committed to the charge of Josephine's aunt and her grandmother, Madame de

La-Pagerie, then residing at Fort Royal. When Josephine was attending school at the convent, as she passed her nights and some of the holidays with her grandmother, she must have heard a great deal of the young Alexander ; but never met him, as he was sent to France while very young.

This, then, is the extent of the acquaintanceship of these young Creoles, who were later to be joined in the bonds of matrimony.

We will not anticipate the sorrowful days, for they came all too soon ; but turn again to the happy ones passed at La-Pagerie. Josephine resisted the entreaties of her aunt and the disinterested advice of her mother for nearly a year, content to dwell with her parents, even though thus isolated from the world of society. Her life was simple and regulated according to the Creole itinerary : in the morning the cool bath in the stream ; the forenoon devoted to the little duties of the household ; noon to breakfast, followed by the siesta ; late afternoon to interchange of visits with the dwellers on neighboring estates, and evening to dinner and social recreation, such as music, reading, and especially dancing, of which Josephine was inordinately fond.

Although La-Pagerie was almost as secluded as the "Happy-Valley" in which dwelt that unhappy Prince of Abyssinia, yet, she did not sigh, like Rasselas, for the world outside, nor try to burst its rocky bounds. The "Prince" came to the valley, though, tradition tells us, and carried away with him an ineffaceable impression of her charms.

Beneath a precipitous rock rising sheer above the stream in the valley above the *sucrerie*, and under the shade of the broad-armed ceiba trees, was—still is—the pool in which, every morning, Josephine and her maid took their matutinal bath. The great rock is masked in vines, from its crevices spring out glossy-leaved "fig" trees, and huge wild-pines sit astride their limbs, holding within their cup-shaped leaves the purest water. From rock to ceiba tree stretch the cables and cordage of long lianes, these also hung with filamentous ferns and rich-hued orchids. Beneath this tent-like canopy, purling quietly in the seclusion of this perfumed bower, the glassy surface of the pool reflected the flower and foliage overhead. No one often disturbed the sanctity of this retreat, for it was held as sacred to Josephine; the slaves had been forbidden, under severest penalties; and few strangers ever visited the valley.

Loosely wrapped in their bath-robes, their feet thrust into hempen-soled slippers, Josephine and her maid tripped gayly up the valley path to the pool, one morning in May. The sun was still hidden behind the bulk of the gloomy Trochon Peak and the valley held the mists as in a cup, level with the tops of the hills. The air was sweet with the fragrance of the shell-tinted frangipanni, the flambeau-trees flamed in scarlet masses by the river-side; the matin music of birds rose from the enveloping mists.

Reaching the pool, they cast aside their wraps,

and cautiously ventured into the chill water. Great bowlders ringed the pool around, but in its center was a bed of sand, where the water was about up to their shoulders as they stood erect. A group of *écrevisse*—or crayfish—had gathered here, but at sight of the invaders they scampered to the shelters of the rocks, whence they peered out sullenly, wriggling their feelers nervously. One, bolder than the rest, sallied forth and nipped the future empress' little toe, thinking—and rightly—that it was a *bonne-bouche* worth some risk to reach.

Josephine shrieked and fell into the water, where she lay immersed, all but her dainty head, while the maid sought out and chased back to his retreat the bold freebooter of the stream.

Floating in ecstatic abandon thus, beneath the o'erarching mosaic of flower and leaf, Josephine was espied by a diminutive humming-bird, who, with shrill chirps of alarm, darted at her face. She instinctively shielded her eyes with one hand as he flew so swiftly at her; but he poised himself a foot away, a-wing in mid-air, still uttering his angry chirps of indignant protest.

His buzzing wings formed a halo of mist about the emerald body, and his pointed helmet gleamed like a gem.

"He must have a nest near," said the maid; "yes, there it is, right over your face. Look, and there's his little wife, sitting, I dare say, on their eggs." She reached up and drew down a length of liane, at which the female darted away, revealing,

inside a dainty cup of lichen-covered down, two eggs as small and white as pearls.

"*Pauv' petit,*" exclaimed Josephine, as she rose to look at them. "Don't touch them, Fifine; don't harm the little darlings. Come, we'll go away; our presence here disturbs these pretty creatures."

The little husband with the gilded crest had perched himself in a loop of liane, where he sat watching; but as Josephine and her companion turned towards the bowlder upon which they had thrown their robes, he darted before them swift as light. His excited manner, his eccentric movements, and his alarm-cries, attracted their attention. Something more than their mere presence had caused this sudden change in his behavior. Suddenly he darted downward; rose, dropped again; his cries were now mingled with another sound,—the dreaded *hiss* of the serpent.

"Look, Yeyette, there! close to my robe. Don't you see? Ah, *Mon Dié!* It is the *Fer-de-Lance!*"

Stunned, stupefied, Josephine saw that terrible apparition; saw its broad flat head, its darting tongue of flame, its slimy folds; and, overcome with the horror of its presence, fainted in her servant's arms.

The maid retreated to the deeper water of the pool, supporting her precious burden with difficulty, her own limbs benumbed and chilled.

"Help! help! Come quickly. To the bathing-place. The serpent is here. Yeyette has fainted!"

She sent her cries out into the morning air; but

at first there was no response. The negroes were away in the fields, and M. Tascher had gone to Trois-Ilets.

Meanwhile, the gallant humming-bird persisted in his attack upon the common foe, with well-directed thrusts of his needle-pointed beak. Swift as lightning, he returned again and again to the attack, blinding the serpent with repeated thrusts, like javelins thrown into his eyes, and eluding his angry fangs by the dexterity of his movements. The humming-bird's attempts at diversion only partially succeeded, however; never for a moment did the serpent lose sight of his prospective prey in the water. Slowly, yet surely, he glided towards the half-fainting Fifine and her unconscious charge. "Holy Mother; and the Fer-de-Lance can swim! He will surely reach us; then——"

But there was no retreat; the great rocks hemmed her in; the serpent was within a dozen feet of her. In sheer despair Fifine sent one last cry for help, which a mocking echo caught and returned to her.

But hark! Was not that an answer?

"Where are you? Who is it? What?"

"Here—at the bathing-place. Oh, come at once. We are lost! The serpent——" It was already entering the water; slowly each sinuous fold melted into the pool; as if, sure of its victim, the Fer-de-Lance wished to prolong the enjoyment of her agony.

There was a sound of approaching footsteps, a crashing of the bushes on the brink; a man's face

appeared. In one swift glance its owner took in the situation. There was a loud report; the surface of the pool was torn into foam by plunging shot; the serpent lay stretched upon the water, mangled and bleeding. Quickly snatching one of the robes from the rock, the rescuer plunged into the pool, enwrapping the form of Josephine, as the maid's nerveless arms relaxed their hold, and bore her to the bank. He was about stooping over to chafe her hands, when, turning to look back, he saw Fifine in greater peril. She had fainted at the moment of rescue; the body of the serpent had drifted against her breast,—a repulsive object, that slimy, checkered skin, against a form as beautiful as Dian's own, though golden bronze in hue. It was the work of a moment only to draw her from the water, and once on the bank her robust constitution asserted itself. Her eyelids quivered, a tremulous sigh escaped her lips. At the first sign of returning consciousness, the rescuer desisted from his labors to hasten the recovery of her mistress, and withdrew.

Fifine caught a glimpse of his retreating form, as she opened her eyes, but as soon as she was on her feet he had disappeared. Forgetting, in the excitement of that moment, all else than that Yeyette was in need of her assistance, she bent all her energies to bring her back to life. She was soon rewarded. Josephine opened her eyes and looked wonderingly about her. Placing a finger warningly on her lips, Fifine cautioned her to keep silence, standing between her and the pool, where the

serpent still floated, that she might have no reminder of the dreadful accident. They had barely recovered their composure, before Madame Tascher came flying towards them, having been sent thither by their unknown savior.*

* The description of the bathing-pool is from the author's notes, made in 1878, while on the Sannois estate, and the adventure with the serpent from tradition, as narrated by a descendant of one of the La-Pagerie slaves.



The Ancienne Cuisine.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PICNIC AT THE CARBET-PEAKS.

Across the bay of Trois-Ilets, rising in the distance high above the wrinkled hills of the coast, rose the majestic bulk of the Carbet-Peaks. Its shadow, of a morning, traveled across the lowland in advance of the rising sun, till it lost itself far out at sea. Having climbed above that mountain sentinel, having dissipated the mists of all its valleys and penetrated the gloomy gorges that seam its eastern slopes, the sun had no other concern with Martinique, save to diffuse its heat and light all over the island. No other obstruction offered to its passage across the zenith, and its descent of the western sky, until it had buried its glowing face in the far distant wave-line of the horizon.

The highest mountain in the island, itself a congeries of mountains, is Mont-Pelée, 4,500 feet in height: a volcano quiescent. Other volcanic peaks rise above the line of the mountain-mass, by scores, giving that diversified character to the surface which distinguishes all the isles of the Caribees, and a climate varying with the altitude. From coast to mountain-top, the temperature sinks as the traveler ascends, until an agreeable mean is found at some two thousand feet.

Toward the latter part of May, in the year 1778, the proprietor of La-Pagerie decided to give his family the pleasure of a picnic on the slopes of the higher hills. The extensive preparations which he considered necessary might cause a smile to one at the present day, when excursions of a hundred miles are taken almost on the spur of the moment; but to the dweller at Trois-Ilets the event was as momentous, almost, as a journey to France. A body of slaves, the bulk of whom were to have a holiday, was sent ahead the day before to clear a trail and a space on one of the lateral ridges beneath the well-known "maroon-tree." Another group was detained to manage the canoes and carry the equipment of the party, while still another was reserved as hammock-bearers and hostlers. For nearly a week, Madame de La-Pagerie had been extremely busy in preparing the food for the expedition: in issuing invitations to the proprietors of adjacent estates, and also to some of the residents of the Fort. At last, all was ready: at daylight, the expectant people gathered at the shore, transferred themselves to the canoes, and set off across the bay. All were happy, the younger members of the party bubbling over with excitement. The French character asserted itself in bursts of song, in wild speculation as to the delights of the unknown hills to which they were going, in frolic, jest and repartee. The largest canoe, hewn by the labor of M. Tascher's own slaves, from a monarch of the mountain-forests, contained the La-Pagerie family and that of the proprietor of an

estate adjacent to Sannois, an English gentleman of means, an exile temporarily from his country, owing to his adherence to a defeated cause.

This gentleman and his wife, who had become well-known through their hospitality, shall be dismissed with this passing mention ; but not so their son, a young man about two years the senior of Josephine, who then appeared to her the embodiment of all the manly virtues. Her eyes watched his every movement as he assisted the ladies to their places in the canoe, and for him she reserved a seat by her side, which he appropriated as the canoe was pushed off from the shore. And while the gay party is being ferried across to the Fort, let us inquire why this apparent attachment which leads them to prefer their own company to that of the others.

In a word : this was the young man whose opportune arrival at the bath, on that fateful morning when the serpent had appeared, had probably saved the life of the eldest daughter of La-Pagerie.

He had modestly withdrawn himself from observation, after warning and accompanying Madame de La-Pagerie to the pool ; but he could not conceal his identity. After Josephine's complete recovery, she had sent for him, and had thanked him, with all that grace of manner which in after years captured the heart of the conqueror of Europe.

Was it strange that the young man was thenceforth her devoted slave, that his heart leaped out to meet hers, that love, ardent and irresistible, took possession of his being ? And, was it to be wondered

at that, viewing him as she did, in the light of a rescuer, an interest in him should be awakened that might lead to love? It might be said of her, as has been said of one who afterwards shone at her own court in France: "The source of her power, as also of her weakness, lay in her vast capacity for love." It is certain that she viewed him with great favor, and that her parents were very anxious to divert her from what might become a hopeless passion. Both were young, both impressionable, both were exteriorly attractive, and both were eager for congenial companionship.

They had known each other since earliest childhood, but an interval of absence had separated them, while he was away in England. His recent return, his hunting excursion in the valley of Sannois, which had led him to his fate, they could not but regard as more than fortuitous. Lovers always surround themselves with a cloud of occult reasoning: from the beginning of the world, they have been divinely led.

They did not follow out this mode of reasoning to its inevitable ending; but their parents did. From different motives, the parents of each were opposed to what apparently would be a desirable match. They cast anxious glances at the young couple, already oblivious to their surroundings, even unaware that the little god was hovering over them, his arrows aimed at their hearts.

There is no more blissful state than that into which Cupid plunges his intended victims: the

world contracts, its horizon shuts them in ; they two only inhabit this mundane sphere. Josephine's lover had already reached the stage of obliviousness to surroundings which precedes the last and acute stage of intense desire. Their parents resolved to nip this would-be blossom in the bud, before it should be too late ; but for this day these two were to be together. They did not dream of the cruel fate provided for them by parental solicitude, but abandoned themselves to the pleasures of the day, and of each other's society.

Fort Royal was soon reached, and at the shore they found friends to meet them. There was Josephine's grandmother, Mme. de La-Pagerie, at whose house she always had a second home ; her unmarried aunt, Mlle. Rosette de La-Pagerie, and her father's influential brother, Baron de Tascher, known as the Chevalier. He was commander of the Fort, then considered one of the most important of the French possessions in the New World, and for his distinguished services in the army had been decorated with the Cross of Saint Louis.

With them, the party from La-Pagerie had brought Josephine's grandmother on the maternal side, Madame de Sannois, who was to stay with Mme. de La-Pagerie, at the Fort, while the younger members were absent in the hills. This old lady was the last of the name then resident in the valley of Sannois, which had been the dower of her daughter on the event of her marriage to M. Tascher, and had descended from the first of the name, who had come

to Martinique from the island of St. Christopher, about the year 1690.*

Three generations were then present at that happy reunion at the Fort. Who could have anticipated that she who was one of the youngest and at that time only distinguished by her gayety and goodness of heart, her happy smile and graceful movements, was to eclipse the fame of even the Baron and Chevalier? Josephine moved about with a smile of greeting for all; she had many admirers and she served them all alike. None had made any impression, except it were the young Englishman, to whom she was indebted, and towards whom she may have been unable to conceal her inclination.

Hammocks and ponies were in waiting at the Fort, and without losing time, as the sun was rising above the lower hills, the merry people set off for their destination. Three hours of an ascending trail finally brought them into the region of the "high-woods," the *bois grandes*, where the air was fresh and cool, and the great trees met and interlaced their giant arms a hundred feet above their heads. Richest tapestry of tropical vegetation lay beneath them, covering the hills and slopes; far away gleamed the sea, a sheet of silver, its burnished surface as yet unruffled by the morning breeze.

The vast fields of golden sugar-cane had yielded to the plants of the temperate clime; in the foothills clumps of feathery bamboo, like huge plumes,

* "*Histoire de la Martinique.*"

succeeded by the tree-ferns. Cocoa palms, which grew everywhere along the coast, disappeared as the hills were reached, and their places were supplied by the *palmiste*, *gru-gru*, and the mountain palm. In the high woods grew the immense *gommiers*, twenty feet across, and from which the mountaineers hew out the canoes which they sell to the dwellers on the coast. The gum of this tree is fragrant, and is burnt as incense in the island churches, while torches, long *flambeaux*, are made from it by rolling the spicy resin in leaves of the *balisier*, or wild plantain. Lianes and bush-ropes netted the high forest together, making it impervious to travelers except where the trails had been cut, and the lush leaves of the orchidaceous plants hung across the path. The trail was along the knife-edge of a lateral ridge of the Pitons, which finally expanded into a broad space at its junction with the main mountain, covered with great trees. This miniature plateau was some three thousand feet above the sea, and the air was cool and sweet. The laborers, who had been sent ahead the day before, and who had camped here over night, had swept the surface clear of underbrush, so that the trunks of the forest giants rose through their canopies of leaves, like the groined columns of some mighty temple.

Here the ponies and hammocks dropped their burdens, hampers were unpacked, rude tables improvised, broad balisier leaves spread upon the ground, where the older members of the party reclined upon blankets, while the younger, after many

cautions to beware of serpents and centipedes, ranged the plateau. All finally gathered about the tables and plantain leaves covered with food and drink, where was a "spread" that would have delighted the heart of a Lucullus, after such a climb as those Creoles had accomplished: all the native viands, cooked under the superintendence of Mme. de La-Pagerie, added to dainties imported from France. Communication with the mother country, though frequently interrupted by the English cruisers, in war time, was by sailing-vessels, and freights were low, so that all the luxuries of France were at the doors of Martinique, in exchange for her products of sugar, coffee and rum. After the breakfast a brief siesta, in hammock and on blanket, and then the games began. A smooth space was leveled in the center of the clearing and the merry children danced till they were tired, which was not till late in the afternoon, when the long shadows of the trees warned them that it was time to leave.

Josephine was locally celebrated as the best dancer in the canton, and entered into the sports of the children with an abandon that was infectious. But, early in the afternoon, seeing that William, her English lover, was not taking part with *esprit*, she desisted and sought him out, where he was moping against a *gommier* trunk.

He was not unhappy, as she thought; his natural British heaviness had contrasted so forcibly with the French levity that she fancied him miserable, when he was only stupid. She did not know then, what

some one of her countrymen has since remarked: that "the English take their pleasures sadly." William was even then picturing to himself his charmer as he had seen her many times in play with him, and gloating upon the thought that some day she would be his. He awoke from his revery as she approached, and they joined in conversation, becoming so absorbed that they did not at first heed the call to horse, and were the last to start.

Josephine's hammock-bearers were patiently waiting beneath the maroon-tree, and William's pony was pawing the ground not far away. While assisting her into her hammock, the young man remarked upon the unusual stillness of the air, which in the mountains is always astir, moved by vagrant breezes from the heated region beneath. The leaves of the trees, and even the broad plantain-pennons, and the fern fronds were motionless as though held by an unseen hand. No sound broke the quietude, save the deep diapason of the *siffleur montagne*, the mountain-whistler, far away in a ravine. The hush was oppressive, the still atmosphere was almost suffocating; these two felt as though they had been left alone in another world than that into which they had been born. "*Allons*," said Josephine; "let us go at once, I feel terribly depressed." Giving his pony's bridle into the hand of his groom, William walked by the side of the hammock, and strove by conversation to divert the mind of his inamorata from what they felt was an impending calamity.

It was enough for him that they had been allowed to have one whole day together; now let come what might, in any event she would be with him. For the others had gone on and were already far down the mountain-side; he was her only protector.

At last it came; what they had dreaded to name, but had felt was imminent. A dull, rumbling roar beneath their feet, around them; a convulsion of the very earth; a moaning among the trees:—it was the earthquake! Their attendants fell upon their knees, shrieking: "*Tremblement-de-terre, tremblement-de-terre*, the earthquake! the earthquake!" That was all; in that single exclamation was expressed the ruin, desolation, and despair attendant upon the most dreaded of cataclysms.

Josephine was thrown forward as the negroes fell, but her lover caught and held her in his arms before her feet touched the ground. One blissful moment he held her, then she gently disengaged his arms and stood erect, though trembling, at his side. A second shock, still more powerful than the first, caused her to clutch his arms with both her hands and gaze wistfully into his face. Her eyes were wide with fear, her slender form quivering with excitement. Never had she looked so nearly divine as at that moment; never had her lover felt the impulse so strong within him to clasp her in his arms again, and bid the world defiance. But no; he was a Briton, slow but sturdy; her implied commands were upon him; her honor was in his hands.

Young as he was, he was held by the traditions of his race; of his ancestry, birth, and breeding. Between them, then, was only the unspoken word. If he had but strained her to his heart, and whispered in her not unwilling ear: "I love you" . . . Ah, William, William; what a prize you lost by your restraint! But perhaps the world will forgive you this timidity; for had you then spoken, there might have been no Josephine, no gracious queen of France for the world's worship.

CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST LOVES OF JOSEPHINE.

THE earthquake lasted but a moment; its effects were seen at Fort Royal in fallen walls, demolished houses, ruined homes.

The absence of the lovers had hardly been noticed, so overcome were the older people by the greater accident. They were merely recognized and assigned their places in the canoe, where they joined in the general lamentation. William was uneasy, for he felt that, somehow, he had failed in his duty; had neglected the opportunity of his life. He was now striving to reconcile his ideas of honor and rectitude with his obligation to self and Josephine. He had failed, that he perceived, for Josephine was now cold towards him, and a rare pout sat enthroned upon her pretty lips.

What had he done? Nothing. He had not met her expectations. It slowly dawned upon him that he had acted a man's part undoubtedly, but not a lover's. He would amend; he tried to draw her attention; but it was too late; the auspicious moment had passed; Josephine was not one to thresh over old straw. She could be carried away by an impetuous lover, by an ardent one; later in

her life she permitted such a one to marry her, whom she at first tolerated, then admired, and finally adored. But William was not a Napoleon.

Her phlegmatic English lover was more constant than Napoleon, if we may believe tradition ; she was his first love, and his last. For it is related that when Josephine lay dying at Malmaison, in the year 1814, he came to the palace and begged for an interview, having all those years held her image in his heart. The ex-Empress was unable to grant it, and died without beholding him ; he expired three days later, from the effects of a wound received in battle.

This is the beginning and the end of Josephine's first romance. She undoubtedly had an affection for this, her first lover, but finally yielded to the desires of her parents and dismissed him from her thoughts. At all events, William soon went to England, and out of her life ; though it is said that he wrote her frequently, letters that were intercepted and never delivered.*

At first, as we have seen, Josephine turned a deaf ear to the urgent entreaties of her aunt, Mme. de Renaudin, to come to her in France ; but after this episode she was extremely anxious to go. From the letters of the period, still preserved in the archives of the La-Pagerie family, we may trace the steps that led from this humble home at Sannois, direct to the throne of France.

* Memoirs of Queen Hortense.

Many fables have been invented and related of the circumstances that led to the marriage of our heroine with Alexandre de Beauharnais ; but not one surpasses in interest and romance the actual story as told by the actors in this drama themselves. It has been charged that the marriage was brought about by the ambitious aunt of Josephine, solely through her intrigues with the Marquis de Beauharnais, the elder. This assertion is directly contradicted by the facts, as shown in the letter of the Marquis, in the year 1778, to Mme. de La-Pagerie, asking the hand of his daughter for his son Alexander, who was in this instance his father's secretary. He opens by declaring his great desire to give unequivocal proof of the esteem in which he holds their acquaintance, and adds : " My children possess ample incomes, each one inheriting some 40,000 *livres* per year, and it rests with you, my dear friend, whether one of your daughters may not share that of my Chevalier. The respect and attachment he feels for Madame de Renaudin, impels him most ardently to desire union with one of her nieces. He seems to think that the second (Desirée) would be of the age most suitable for him.

" I myself regret that your eldest daughter (Josephine) is not some years younger, as she certainly should have the preference ; but I must confess to you, that there seems to me too little difference between her age, fifteen and a half, and my son's, which is only seventeen. However, this is one of those occasions in which the feelings of a parent must

yield to circumstances." The Marquis then goes on to declare that his son possesses all the engaging qualities necessary to make a woman happy, and assures his friend that he does not expect a *dot* with his daughter, as the Chevalier is already well provided for, with his 40,000 *livres*, inherited from the maternal side, and the 25,000 more which he is to expect from himself. He then urges the father to send his daughter to France with the utmost despatch—*le plus tôt possible*.—"You owe me this pledge of friendship," he concludes; and adds, in case he cannot himself accompany her, to entrust her to some trustworthy person; but not by any means to send her by a ship of war, as she would be far more comfortable in a merchant packet.

The Marquis also wrote the mother at the same time, repeating his offer to the father; and, as though sensible that it was an unusual proceeding to ask the hand of a younger daughter while the elder was still unmarried, he adds: "Not that any one has said any but agreeable things of the elder; but we fear she is too old, relatively to my son's age. . . . He is well worthy your regard, madame; and if, as I expect, mademoiselle, your daughter—of whom I have received such charming portraits—resembles you, my dear madame, then I shall have no fear for the happiness of my son."

He is not content with this, but even writes the grandmother at Fort Royal, and also the uncle, the Chevalier Tascher de La-Pagerie, to use their influence. "Use all your efforts, my dear Baron, to

induce your brother and sister-in-law to send their second daughter to France." Mme. Renaudin joins with him in urging forward the prospective union, and, in order that it might not be said that her niece had made the voyage to France in order to get married, solely, she advised her parents to give out that she was going to complete her education. She draws a flattering portrait of Alexander, declaring that it would be impossible for her to eulogize him beyond his deserts, with his handsome face, fine figure, lively disposition, love for science, and, above all, "the beautiful qualities, of soul and heart, in him so blended that no one knows him but to love." There is no doubt of the affection existing between Mme. de Renaudin and her god-son; she had watched over him since his earliest youth. The aunt, likewise, anticipating the very natural desire of her brother's family to see Josephine settled in advance of her sisters, alludes to the regret of the Marquis that the eldest daughter is not at least three years younger than Alexander. "But then, you know," she concludes, "this will not be the first instance of a younger sister being established before the elder. And, since the age of the younger is so advantageous, we cannot but believe that Heaven has so ordered it."

Meanwhile, what had happened in Martinique? Communication between the island-colonies and the mother country was slow and uncertain; the direst of events had taken place. Heaven had not so ordered it, apparently, for a week before that letter

was written, Desirée, the object of her aunt's solicitude, had expired. The message did not, however, reach its destination till early in December, thus only renewing the grief of the afflicted family. Writing on the 9th of January, 1778, M. de La-Pagerie sadly replies :—"A malignant fever carried off our dear Desirée, on the 16th of October last, at the very moment you were thinking of her happiness." *

He feels very grateful to the Marquis for his expression of confidence, and this renewed assurance of his esteem ; and, as it was quite evidently his desire to unite the two families by marriage, without an expressed predilection for any one of his daughters, he (M. Tascher) takes the liberty to submit that the third, and youngest, might be found available. This one was Marie-Françoise, called by the family "Manette." "She is now," he wrote, "eleven and a half years of age ; of a gay and lively disposition, *naif* and sensible. She promises well as to face and figure,—and education will do the rest."

He writes that he had great difficulty in inducing her and her mother to consent to the separation, but it had finally been done, and he would sail with her in April or May.

It seems only natural that the eldest daughter should have felt the slight thus put upon her, and she doubtless so expressed herself, for the father ex-

* Archives de Famille.

plains to Mme. de Renaudin :—" The eldest, you are aware, has been home from the convent for some time, and, as she has frequently desired me to take her to France, she will be, I fear, a little put out by your evident preference for the younger. . . . She has a very lovely complexion, beautiful eyes, handsome arms, a shapely figure, and a remarkable aptitude for music. . . .

" I furnished her with a teacher of the guitar, while she was in the convent, and she profited well by her lessons, and has a very charming voice. It is a pity that she cannot be sent to France to complete her education, so well begun ; and if it were only in my power, I would send the two together. But, how can I separate a mother from the two remaining daughters, so soon after the third has been snatched from her by death ? " This letter was written from St. Lucia, where Mr. Tascher had a plantation.

It was immediately answered by the aunt, who wrote—after consulting with the Marquis—under date of 11th March, 1778 :—

" Come to us, my dear brother ; come, with one of your daughters, or with *two* :—whatever you do we shall find agreeable ; and we shall not doubt you will be guided by Providence, who knows better than we what is best for us. . . . You are acquainted with our sincere desires : we wish for one of your daughters (which one did not seem to matter). The Cavalier deserves to be made perfectly happy, and you alone, perhaps, are the one best able to declare which

one possesses the requisite qualities. . . . So act accordingly."

Meanwhile, there was trouble in the Tascher family, for the youngest daughter, backed in her opposition by her mother and her grandmother, declared she would not take the voyage to France, even if she never had a husband. The father, who seems to have been an honest, though henpecked husband, was distracted, as between his duty and desires. He wrote Mme. Renaudin again, before definitely deciding upon which daughter to send, under date of June 24th, 1778: "You know, my dear sister, the blind devotion of most of our Creole mothers for their children. . . . In short, not only is Manette opposed to the voyage, but her mother and grandmother,—and you know what that means! . . . If I had but the means, I would start immediately, with the eldest, who not only wishes to see *la belle* France, but is consumed with a desire to see her dear aunt. Only two things prevent me: a lack of means and the fact that she was fifteen years old yesterday. She is likewise well-developed for her age; indeed, for the last five or six months has seemed to be nearer eighteen than fifteen. She has, as I have written you, a happy disposition; plays a little on the guitar, has a good voice, and a liking for music, in which she will sometime become proficient. But, alas, I fear she will not fulfill your expectations, on account of the objection you have to her age." In this tenor also he wrote the Marquis, realizing that his was a most embar-

rassing position. He did not wish to let pass such an opportunity for an alliance with so distinguished a family—as he frankly admitted—yet he hesitated to recommend without qualification the eldest daughter; though her only defect was on account of her age; which was, in his opinion, more than counterbalanced by her numerous good qualities. To this effect he wrote the Marquis, who replied, as the aunt had done, that he would not assume to decide; so it be one of the daughters, he would be satisfied. But he hoped his old friend would come soon; and whichever one he brought should also be their choice.

Alexander, who was then absent with his regiment, was acquainted with the bizarre condition of affairs, and immediately responded that he readily accepted the exchange, having had a preference for the eldest all along. He expressed himself satisfied with whatever arrangement should be made, and, though he did not allow thoughts of his prospective bride to distract him from his duties, was somewhat disappointed that Josephine herself had not arrived, instead of a letter. He did not doubt he should like her. "The great attachment she has for her aunt, and her strong desire to be with her, inclines me in her favor. . . I trust, my dear papa, that you have already urged M. de La-Pagerie to send us his eldest daughter, whom we have always more ardently desired than the youngest."

This the Marquis probably did, for in a letter of 9th September, 1778, he complimented the planter



Rivière Madame, Fort de France.

upon his decision, and assured him that they were already looking forward with impatience to their arrival, and the day they landed in France would be the happiest of their lives. With the consent of his son, he sent to Martinique authority to publish there the banns with whomsoever should be selected, leaving a blank space for the name; an unusual mark of confidence in the integrity of his old friend and companion-in-arms.

By the same packet, the aunt wrote her brother saying how happy they had been since the uncertainty was removed, and that she only hoped that Manette would be able to obtain such a fine *parti* as her sister. She felt more than sure that her sister in-law, Mme. de La-Pagerie, would some day thank her for having secured for her such a desirable son-in-law. She assured her brother that M. de Beauharnais was exceedingly impatient to embrace him and his daughter. "Alas, if I could only fly to you. . . . Adieu, my dear brother; adieu. But come, *come!* Your dear sister implores you."

Thus it was decided: the eldest daughter, Josephine, was to be sent to France in search of a husband. No, not in search of one; he was already burning with impatience to embrace her. She was his bride, in fact, before she left the soil of Martinique. Her name had been inserted in the blank space on the banns, and had been proclaimed.

This may be new, at least to English readers; but the truth of this statement has been established by

the letters from which we have quoted ; the actors in this strange drama have told their own story.*

But how was the news received at Sannois La-Pagerie ? Outside the family, among the slaves, there was bitter lamentation ; for all felt for Josephine a love approaching reverence. The sad intelligence reached the little hamlet where her old nurse, Adée, dwelt by the shore. She at once hastened to her own "Yeyette," big with the importance of a message. She had consulted the Carib sibyl ; more than that, she had studied the flight of the *Diablotins ;* "and from their flight strange auguries she drew."

"*Yeyette-moi*, don't go ; you must not. Look, I have read the Devil-bird's message, it is this : 'Beware of the sea.' Again and again, in their flights around the Diamond, they have confirmed it. And, besides, don't you remember the sibyl's warning ?—*Vous serez Reine de France ; vous aurez de belles années ; mais* (O, see the warning here), *vous periez dans une émeute.*" †

* Verified by the biographer of Josephine, who consulted the letters in the family archives, which were freely placed at his disposal.

† Local tradition.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VOYAGE TO FRANCE.

ALTHOUGH every member of the La-Pagerie family was sensible of the great advantage of this projected alliance with the house of Beauharnais, and Josephine herself was extremely anxious to visit the mother-country, yet, when the time came to say adieu to her mother, her friends, and her dear Martinique, she hesitated. Again, since the month of March, 1778, when news of the treaty signed between France and America had been received, a sea-voyage was considered very unsafe. It was in February of that year that our commissioners, Franklin, Lee and Deane, had concluded the negotiations which resulted in a treaty of alliance, commerce, and amity with the French nation. Since then, war had existed between the mother-country and England; English cruisers swept the seas, English war-ships menaced Martinique. M. Tascher would not take upon himself any further responsibility, in view of the opposition he had encountered from the mother and grandmother, and, unless passage could be found in a convoyed packet, or neutral vessel, refused to make the voyage. Thus nearly a year passed away, during which the family was torn with anxiety, and the aunt, Mme. de

Renaudin, harassed with the fear that the Beauharnais might change their opinion, or the young man's ardor might cool. Meanwhile, although her brother assured her that he was sincerely seeking an opportunity, it was late in the year 1779 before she had definite news of his sailing.

Scarcely a month passed that did not leave with its departure some impressive reminder of the possible dangers of that sea-voyage. One morning in April, the peace of the valley of Sannois was disturbed by the boom of heavy guns. Hastening to the hill overlooking the *sucrerie* Josephine and her father saw, dim in the distance, the ghost-like outlines of several immense warships, wrapped in the smoke from their own guns. The terrible Rodney had come, as he had threatened, to reduce the rebellious islands to submission. Seventeen years had passed since his first appearance here, when his sailors and marines had assisted at the reduction of Fort Royal, and when he had also conquered the islands of St. Lucia and Granada. He had since become the scourge of the French naval marine; his name was in every mouth. The French fleet concentrated at Fort Royal had sailed out to give him battle. The result was indecisive, though the English fleet was driven away for the time; but the action, within view of these interested spectators, who had so much at stake in the outcome of the war, only emphasized the dangers of a voyage across the Atlantic.*

* See Appendix (4).

"It must not be, Yeyette; the risks are too great, the dangers too many."

"As you say, my dear papa; I am content. France attracts me, and to see Paris has been the dream of my life; but I am happy here."

"I believe you could be, my daughter; you have always been a good and dutiful child. But, again, I desire to secure for you a future of at least some promise. Here there is absolutely nothing ahead. See, how have I worked all these years; your mother has devoted her life to her duties and our welfare; yet, what have we now? Less than when we began. Only last year, forty of our slaves died, from the fever and the serpents. I myself am broken, despairing; every earthquake, every hurricane, leaves us a little poorer, less hopeful."

"*Mon cher papa!* And yet he would send me from him! His oldest daughter; the only 'son' he has. Would that I were in truth a son, able to help you in the fields. If I were only Joseph,—as you named me, instead of Josephine! Alas, woman can do so little that is worth the while! But, at least, I can stay with you, I will not desert you."

"No, Yeyette, it is better that you go to France; there will you find a greater future. Your aunt will leave you her heir, even if nothing comes of this projected union. Yes, you can help me better there."

There were distractions enough now at Fort Royal, for all the French fleets rendezvoused there on their

way to America. In 1779, arrived the gallant Count De Grasse, chief of the squadron that sailed from Brest to join at Martinique the fleet of Comte d'Estaing. The fort was the gayest place, perhaps, in the colonies, and Josephine, as the niece of the commandant, Baron de Tascher, and one of the prettiest young ladies of the place, was the object of many attentions.

At Brest, whence the fleet had sailed, was her betrothed, and it is possible that she received news of him from the officers, who must have envied the Chevalier his good fortune. But they passed on, gay and gallant Frenchmen ; sailed out of her vision into the horizon, towards America, where they so materially assisted our forefathers at Savannah, and contributed later towards the downfall of Cornwallis. They sailed on into illimitable space ; some of them returned after the Revolution was over ; but many of them are still sailing, sailing, through the voids of the century past.

The household returned to its wonted vocations ; the ladies acted as mediators between the lord of the estate, who was master absolute over his slaves, and the negroes. Josephine, made sad and thoughtful by her recent experiences, was to the slaves a veritable Lady Bountiful ; she passed her time in deeds of charity, and doubtless then acquired that angelic disposition for which her name is even yet a popular synonym. The ladies of La-Pagerie were celebrated for their care of the slaves, exercising a supervision over them from the time of birth, teaching

them the catechism, healing their wounds, interceding for them when threatened with punishment, at once protectors, instructors, and sisters of charity.

Josephine might be seen at this time, clad in cool white muslin, a gay Madras handkerchief about her head, swinging in a hammock of silk grass, or the center of an admiring group of negroes, joining in the dance to the music of the *tambou*, at evening by the light of the *flambeaux*, or beneath the brilliant tropical moon.

But this life of mingled care and gayety could not go on forever. M. Tascher was not unmindful of his promise to the Marquis. Ever watchful for an opportunity to redeem that promise, he at last found passage in a convoyed ship, "*La Pomone*," which sailed for France in September.

In France, we might have found the parties interested in this voyage as anxious as the voyagers themselves. Tired of garrison gallantries, at last, the Chevalier was anxiously inquiring for the news from Martinique. During the month of August not a word, but on the fifth of September he wrote his father that he had received secret information of a convoy about to sail from that island. And he had a presentiment that his intended bride would come at that time, and was all impatience. More than a month passed, however, without further news, but the last of October, Mme. de Renaudin received a letter from her brother, dated the twentieth of that month, by which she learned that he had arrived at

Brest, together with their sister, Mlle. Rosette de La-Pagerie, and his eldest daughter.

That same year, 1779, there arrived at another point on the coast of France, coming from another island-colony of that country, the one who later raised to such a height of power and prosperity this unknown girl, Mlle. Josephine de La-Pagerie. . . .

Meanwhile, at receipt of the news from Brest, Mme. de Renaudin and the young Alexander hastened to join the La-Pageries. Hearing that M. Tascher was very ill from an old wound or malady, aggravated by the long and tempestuous sea-voyage, the Chevalier, with rare thoughtfulness, hurried on in advance, in order to ascertain how seriously he was affected, and if necessary to prepare his godmother for any shock.

He had also arranged with one of his comrades at Brest to send him an express, if M. Tascher should be critically ill ; but all these precautions were unnecessary, for he was found to be in better health than they had expected from the reports.

About the twenty-eighth of October, in a letter to his father, he details the condition of affairs, and gives a hint of the impression made upon him by the young Creole.

" You will pardon me for not writing sooner, but since our arrival here I have hardly had a moment to myself. . . . Our departure is now fixed for Tuesday next. I need not assure you that we are

all impatient to be near you. . . . Mlle. de La-Pagerie, who is as anxious to see you as the rest of us, you will perhaps find less pretty than you had expected, but her modesty and sweetness of character surpass anything that has been told you. . . . I found, to my disgust, that all the town seemed to have been informed of the nature of our errand, which I had thought a secret, but, though I am compelled to blush, sometimes, at the compliments thrust upon me, still I find some satisfaction in the flattering marks of attachment from my comrades, and their lively interest in my welfare. . . . "

Thus, though somewhat disappointed at the first glimpse of his bride, the Chevalier was, on the whole, disposed to make the best of affairs.

A few days later, while en-route, Mme. de Renaudin wrote the Marquis assuring him, upon her sacred word, that Josephine would not disappoint him in any respect. . . . "*Sera votre chere et tendre fille, c'est moi qui vous en assure.*" She possessed all the beautiful qualities essential to the happiness of the Chevalier. And as to the latter: "He begs me to embrace you for him, and not to take it ill that he does not write to-day; for he is so well engaged that he cannot. Yes, my good friend, he is very much occupied at present, *very much absorbed*, with your future daughter-in-law."

The recreant Alexander does add a line, however, to the effect that he finds the company of his father's future daughter so sweet that this must be

the explanation of his silence. He expresses the great desire they both feel to be near him, and the hope that the Marquis is looking forward to embracing both his children when they arrive. So it seems that Alexander had lost little time in his love-making. He had the advantage of position, of education, of experience in the gallantries of the day ; against these qualifications Josephine had nothing to oppose except her own native charms. He was not at first attracted by her ; but within three days she had won him, in spite of himself. The understanding is complete between these two children, brought together across so many leagues of sea, destined for each other by the machinations of two intriguing relatives. Alexander had been predisposed to the match, from the representations of his godmother, whom he devotedly loved, and his father, whom he reverenced. It does not seem to have occurred to him to combat their wishes, and so he at once set himself to the task of liking this young Creole, as soon as she arrived. Josephine, as we have seen, was equally complaisant. "To love was one of the necessities of her being." It does not appear that she had ever had any one upon whom to lavish the wealth of affection with which nature had endowed her. Her father and mother were always occupied in the cares of the estate ; her servants, her maids, however much she may have been attached to them, were not suitable subjects for a reciprocal affection that could attain to the dignity of a passion.

Modest, retiring, but never coy nor shy, Josephine had freely accepted the Chevalier's advances, and within a few days had enmeshed him in his own net. He was captured by that nameless charm, by the infinite grace and sweetness, in her so harmoniously and ravishingly blended. Never, at her best estate, has Josephine been declared beautiful, but universal testimony has been recorded from the mouths of plebeians as well as princes, that she was ever gracious and winning.

Josephine, although developed physically beyond her years, was still a child at heart and in the simplicity of her manners. It is said that she and her young companion took their dolls with them on the voyage and played with them throughout the long and dreary days. The Chevalier rallied her upon this, but she replied sweetly enough, and he rather congratulated himself that she had no more harmful acquaintances. He found her "heart-whole and fancy free," at all events ; and he delighted in the reflection that she was to be his, his own, without the shadow of a rival to arouse his jealousy.

They reached Paris about the tenth of November, where they were met by the Marquis, who, from the very first, attached himself to Josephine as if she were his own daughter ; and she reciprocated this affection with a loyal devotion.

Since everything seemed propitious for an immediate marriage, the desires of young Alexander were acceded to and preparations at once commenced. Mme. de Renaudin the more readily consented, as

she feared a possible miscarriage of her dearly cherished plans, and saw that the young people were so evidently attracted to each other. She generously furnished her niece with a trousseau costing 20,000 francs, and insisted that the ceremony should be performed at her country house at Noisy, in order to avoid the publicity and confusion attendant upon a wedding in the capital. The ceremony was fixed for the thirteenth of December; but several days before it took place, M. Tascher de La-Pagerie, who was suffering from a relapse of his malady, was obliged to delegate his authority to the Abbé Louis Samuel de Tascher, a doctor of Sorbonne, and the most distinguished representative of the family in France.

In the presence of the Abbé, of Mme. de Renaudin (who filled the place of mother to her niece) of the Marquis de Beauharnais, Count Claude, his brother, and several other reputable witnesses, Mlle. Josephine de La-Pagerie and Alexander de Beauharnais were made one, in the Church of Noisy-le-Grand.

"And so they were married." Were they mated? Does any one whisper of *love?* Perhaps; the aunt and the father may have cherished the delusion for awhile. But, it was as purely a *mariage de convenance* as any that has ever been arranged since it became the custom to marry and be given in marriage.

Their interest in each other had been awakened by the representations of their friends, stimulated by the romantic manner of their betrothal, and propinquity had done the rest.

CHAPTER X.

THE BRIDE OF BEAUHARNAIS.

THIS venture in matrimony of a young man of nineteen and a girl of sixteen was at the outset felicitous. The first year passed away very happily, and the young bride, diverted by the attractions of gay Paris, was the petted idol of the Vicomte's relatives, who were numerous and attentive. She did not altogether like the transition from the free life of Sannois to the artificial state of existence she was obliged to lead in France, and has left on record her protest against the paints and perfumes, and the heavy clothing with enormous hoops, "which would not permit the wearer to pass straight through a doorway." In the summer the young pair resided at Noisy-le-Grand, with Mme. de Renaudin, and in the winter at the *hotel* of the Marquis, in the Rue Thévenot. We have seen what were the influences that surrounded and shaped her, during the formative period of her character ; it will now be shown how she developed, from a Creole provincial, with no education save that furnished in an obscure convent, into one of the most polished and accomplished ladies of the time. In the first place, she possessed infinite tact and perception of the proprieties. She

was constantly surrounded by members of the aristocracy, who had received their education in the most approved schools of society. One who was of the greatest service to her, and who became her most affectionate friend and adviser, was Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais, wife of Alexander's uncle, the Count Claude. Born of wealthy parents, at Paris, in 1738, she had received a brilliant education and had displayed precocious talents, writing verses at the age of ten, and applauded by the literary celebrities of the day. Married at the age of fifteen, she procured a separation from her husband a few years later, and abandoned herself to literary pursuits, her salon in the city and at Fontainebleau becoming the favorite resort of the distinguished men and women of the day. She displayed a deep interest in Josephine, who through her was initiated into the mysteries of literary Paris, though she may not have read all her books. She was cultured and refined, whatever may have been her morals, and she exercised a great influence, and in the right direction, upon the wife of her nephew. Another lady with whom she became intimate, and who was a frequent visitor to the family, was Mme. de La Rochefoucauld, a relative of Alexander's and Mme. de Rohan Chabot-Léon *née* Elizabeth de Montmorency. The establishment of the Marquis was worthy his rank, and among the numerous and brilliant salons open to the young vicountess was that of Madame de Montesson, the morganatic wife of the Duc d'Orleans, where Josephine first met Mme. de Genlis,

and where were assembled all the grand society dames of the time. It is true that the name of the Vicomtesse de Beauharnais is not inscribed upon the official lists of the receptions at the Court ; but it is difficult to believe that she was not received, as she was fully entitled to that honor by birth and marriage. It is known that her husband was one of the most welcome of the cavaliers at the Queen's receptions, and she had bestowed upon him the title of the *beau danseur* of the Court. She was privately received by Marie Antoinette, however, and this made amends for a public presentation. Her staunchest friend and mentor was the aunt who had been instrumental in bringing her to Paris, and consummated her marriage with the Chevalier. Mme. de Renaudin, a native of Martinique, had come to Paris in 1760, had secured a separation from her husband, on the basis of incompatibility and brutality, and was then living at ease upon the alimony granted her, and a large private fortune. At first, under the protection of the Marquis de Beauharnais and his wife, after the latter had left France, she entered into an amorous attachment with the former, and late in life they were married. She maintained a separate establishment at Noisy, but appears to have resided in or near the household of the Marquis, rue Thévenot, in the winter season.

She was godmother to Alexander, to whom she was most tenderly attached, and filled a mother's place in the heart of Josephine. Notwithstanding her equivocal relations with the old Marquis, her

family seem to have held her in esteem, and her letters show her to have possessed many admirable qualities of head and heart. Her brothers corresponded with her regularly, and in one of the early letters sent to her from the Baron is a confidential description of his sweetheart, to whom he was afterwards married. One cannot but wish that the young Alexander could have found it in his heart to detail the charms of his *fiancée* with such enthusiasm and minuteness: "She has such a beautiful complexion, such lovely eyes, so pretty a mouth, so divine a figure, the whole forming a most ravishing *ensemble*, that I am more than charmed."

Under the tutelage and instruction of her aunt, whose twenty years in Paris had made a perfect Parisian, Josephine applied herself most assiduously to acquire that superficial knowledge which passes current in the world of society, and that polish of manner which glosses over many defects. She possessed natural tact and aptitude, and above all a good heart, which is at the basis of good manners. Doubtless she had more amiable qualities of heart than knowledge of science, literature or art; but with what success she applied herself, her subsequent career, as wife of the First Consul and as Empress of the French, abundantly testifies. During the first few months of their marriage the Chevalier devoted himself to his wife with commendable zeal for her happiness, and she returned his attentions with affection. She was sincerely attached to the Viscount, for her heart felt the need of some one to

love, and all her thoughts centered in him. She was young and inexperienced ; he was also young, but ardent, ambitious, impatient of restraint. Soon he began to assume an attitude towards her which did not fail to produce its effect : that of master and mentor.

He had received a more complete education, was more in touch with the world than she, with her Creole manners and provincial teaching, and soon assumed an air of superiority which was galling, even to the amiable Josephine. Thus their estrangement began : the novelty having worn off, the eyes of this mercurial Alexander were opened to his true position as the husband of one whom he had espoused more through deference to his father and godmother than from actual affection. He taunted her with the fact that she was merely a demoiselle educated in a colonial convent, and brought up by a mother and godmother noted only for their domestic virtues.

Two years after their marriage their domestic relations were strained to the point of open rupture, and the father and aunt, hesitating to intervene openly, solicited the services of Alexander's old tutor, M. Patricol, to whom he was very much attached. This gentleman held a long conversation with the Viscount, then absent from Paris with his regiment, who frankly stated the reasons for his conduct. In effect, he said : he had thought at first he could be able to live happily with Mlle. de La-Pagerie, notwithstanding the defects of her early education, and

had set himself zealously at work to amend the neglect of the first fifteen years of her life. But, shortly after their union, he had found in her a lack of confidence, an unreadiness to lend herself to his guidance, which had chilled his ardor, and perhaps his affection. Her total indifference to his plans for her improvement had caused him to renounce them forever, and in place of spending his time at home, as he had originally contemplated, vis-a-vis with one who scarcely ever addressed him, he had tired of this monotonous existence, and had returned to the more congenial atmosphere of the garrison In short, it was the same old story : Mr. Young-husband, surfeited with the sweets of domesticity, balked in his efforts to attain the unattainable, and hankering after the forbidden pleasures of his bachelor life, withal, would saddle upon the wife all the responsibility for his peccadilloes.

His letters of this period are full of advice as to her studies and her behavior. It would seem, from her own letters, that Josephine's education was by no means inferior to that of the ladies of her time. Her epistolary style was correct and yet simple, she had made good progress in drawing and music, and had early exchanged her guitar for a more fashionable harp. But she was extremely averse to severe mental effort and, though she may have appreciated her husband's scheme of studies, was utterly incapable of traveling in the path he had marked out. With a Creole's dislike for schools and continued application, she preferred the easier method of

unconscious absorption through the medium of her environment.

A temporary reconciliation was brought about, through the intervention of their friends, shortly before the birth of their first child (Eugene, subsequently viceroy of Italy), on the third of September, 1781. But even the delights of paternity, as well as the entreaties of his wife, were unavailing to restrain him from returning to garrison life. He had tasted freedom, and he wished to pursue it further. One of his charges against his wife was, that she had become jealous and petulant; but after this practical abandonment of her and his heir she resigned herself to the care of her infant, finding in his innocent companionship and caresses a solace for her grief.

It was thought that extended travel might distract his attention and absence renew his affection for his wife, and in November, the Viscount obtained leave of absence from his regiment and took a journey into Italy, going to Genoa and thence to Rome. Writing from Genoa, in the latter part of 1781, he mentions having been presented to the Doge, by whom he was politely received, and who gave him agreeable news of Lord Cornwallis and the Comte de Grasse. In a postscript only, he alludes to his wife, to whom (he adds) he will write from Rome. Returning to Paris after six months' absence, he was warmly welcomed by his wife, and it was thought the reconciliation was now complete.

The Marquis and Mme. de Renaudin were over-

joyed, for they had most loyally espoused the cause of the wife, and had been unwilling witnesses of her sufferings. Their joy was of short duration, however, for the fickle spouse soon announced his determination to return to his regiment, then at Verdun, and Josephine, afflicted by a new access of jealousy, overwhelmed him with tears and reproaches. Thus unhappy in his domestic relations, made uneasy by a conscience not altogether lost to a sense of his infidelities, Alexander sought to obtain forgetfulness in the pursuit of "glory." He offered his services to the Marquis de Bouillé, who had recently arrived from Martinique, with extensive schemes against the English colonies. From his uncle, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, he received a letter warmly recommending him for the position of aide-de-camp; but failing to secure the coveted situation, he resolved to volunteer. On the last of September, 1782, he sailed from Brest, arriving at Martinique in November, where he was well received by the La-Pagerie family.

M. Tascher, Josephine's father, had only returned from France at the beginning of the year, and had been the unhappy bearer of ill-tidings to his wife of their daughter's infelicities. Madame Tascher at first received him coldly, but he made a complete conquest of the Baron and his wife, the latter declaring, in a letter to her sister-in-law, that she would be the happiest of women if only her own son resembled the dear Alexander. As commander of the port of Fort Royal, Baron de Tascher was

prominent in all the affairs of the island; those, at least, of national importance. During the five years from 1778–1783, Fort Royal was the port-of-call and refitting station for all those immense fleets engaged in the American war of the Revolution. The Baron thus indirectly contributed to the success of American arms, for he received and successively entertained the ships of the Comte d'Estaing, going to the United States, and which remained for six months in Martinique waters; the squadron of Lamothe-Piquet, obliged to repair here the damages received in glorious action in that same bay of Fort Royal; that of the Comte de Guichen (who had been engaged by Rodney); and lastly the grand squadron of the Comte de Grasse, which had made this port its general rendezvous. Since the departure of Josephine, two great naval battles had been fought off Martinique; one within sight of her home. It was in April, 1780, that the English fleet under Rodney narrowly escaped defeat, after a most desperate battle, in Martinique waters. On April twelfth, 1782, occurred that terrible naval engagement between Rodney and de Grasse, off the coast of Dominica, an island adjacent to Martinique, which lasted from seven in the morning till six at night, and in which the British took seven French ships of the line and two frigates. The boom of the guns could be heard at Martinique, and the crippled fleet returned hither for repairs.* In some

* See Appendix (5).

of these stirring scenes the Baron was a participant, and with all the great captains and admirals of the French fleet he was on terms of intimate friendship. But, although Alexander was burning to distinguish himself, and must have been stirred to frenzy by the accounts from the lips of the actors in this bloody drama, yet he was compelled to await the outcome of events, ingloriously inactive. The peace of January, 1783, and the treaty of Versailles, put an end to all warlike preparations ; and thus his voyage had been in vain ; unkind fate had thwarted his desires. It has been stated that the Vicomte de Beauharnais accompanied Rochambeau to America ; but there is no authentic record of such action ; in fact, although such may have been his intention, on his departure for Martinique, it was never consummated.

During this period of enforced idleness his natural levity did not fail to assert itself, for he had a liaison with a woman of loose character, who was at enmity with the house of La-Pagerie. By her influence, he was incited to open rupture with M. Tascher, and his jealousy excited against his wife, left free and alone in gay and dissolute Paris. In an interview with his father-in-law he boastfully announced his intention of sailing for France, where he would henceforth be the master in his own house, and would call his wife to strict account. And this, notwithstanding the last packet had brought him news that should have inclined him towards his



A WATERFALL NEAR JOSEPHINE'S BIRTHPLACE.

wife : the birth of a daughter (Hortense) 10th of April, 1783.

The patience of the La-Pageries was at last exhausted. Indignant at the conduct of this unfaithful son-in-law towards one who was more precious to him than his own life, M. Tascher wrote the recreant husband a letter full of reproaches, distinctly throwing down the gauntlet, offering to take back his daughter, for fear she might come to want, and to save her from the indignities to which she was exposed. He closed with the bitter taunt that the only war Alexander had made, in this boastful campaign of his, was against the reputation of adefenseless woman and the peace of her family. This merited reproach rankled in the heart of the offender, and exasperated him to such a degree that, immediately upon arrival in Paris, he came to an open rupture with his wife, notwithstanding the intercession of his father and godmother, who in vain urged the claims, not alone of the mother, but of the children.

His rage and wounded vanity prompted him to demand a legal separation, the first steps toward which he immediately instituted.

Proudly conscious of her own integrity, and sustained by the sympathies of the Viscount's own family, Josephine withdrew to the shelter of a convent, after the custom of the time. Within the seclusion of Panthemont, she awaited the decision of the court, which was entirely in her favor ; the care of Eugene seems to have been given to the father,

but Josephine retained the custody of her daughter, and to mother and child a sufficient alimony for their maintenance was adjudged.

The Creole mistress is said to have followed Beauharnais to Paris, and she alone adhered to him ; his entire family, including his father, his elder brother, and his aunt, the Countess Fanny de Beauharnais, espoused the cause of Josephine and rallied to her side with redoubled attentions and solicitude.

CHAPTER XI.

MARTINIQUE REVISITED.

THE La-Pageries were rejoiced at the prospect of once more receiving their absent daughter at Sannois, and urged her to sail immediately for Martinique. But for the urgent entreaties of the Marquis de Beauharnais, doubtless Josephine would have sought the haven of peace at Sannois, for her perturbed spirit needed rest and seclusion. It may have been owing to this desire of her father-in-law to afford her a retreat that the Marquis left the house in the rue Thévenot and hired a residence at Fontainebleau, in August, 1785. The Viscount, furious at his defeat, yet ashamed of the ignoble part he had played, had rejoined his regiment, falling back into the career which had been interrupted by the unfortunate voyage to Martinique.

At Fontainebleau Josephine resumed the monotonous routine of domestic duties, the placid state of existence into which her husband had burst, like a hurricane ; and as, after the storm, there is always a lull, or calm, so now into her life came an interval of repose. Her aunt sold her home at Noisy and came to live near her, as also the Countess Fanny de Beauharnais, the devoted godmother of Hortense. At

Fontainebleau, then, the afflicted wife was surrounded by loving relatives, and at the head of her father-in-law's household she presided with grace and dignity. She lived quietly in this modest retreat, rarely going into society, her only diversions being a walk through the magnificent forest or a ride on horseback into the adjacent country. It was, perhaps, not alone from a desire for seclusion that she was impelled to lead this quiet life, since there was an absolute necessity for the husbanding of her resources. It appears, at this time, from her letters to Martinique, that she was depending less upon her husband's pension than upon remittances from home.

These letters, so sweet and simple, without literary pretension, the unaffected productions of a good-hearted, earnest woman, are still preserved in the family archives. They tell us that the haughty pride of M. Tascher would not allow of his daughter's receiving alms from one who had so deeply wronged her. On the 20th May, 1787, for instance, she acknowledges the receipt of 2,789 *livres*, at the hand of her uncle, the Baron, who was on a brief visit to France. He urged her to return with him to their native island, but it was not till a year later, in June, 1778, that she finally embarked for Martinique. She may have encouraged a hope that Alexander would relent and return to her, which sustained her during those three years ; but if so it was at last abandoned. They had not met during that time, though a correspondence had passed between them ; mainly with reference to the children,

it is true, but serving to keep alive the remembrance of happier days. She would doubtless have received him back, if only for the sake of their children; for Josephine, as Napoleon once said, had "no more resentment than a pigeon." She remembered favors, but forgot injuries, and all her troubles arose from the fact that base people took advantage of this nobility of nature, this magnanimity of soul, which could see no evil in the acts of those who had once been her friends. There is no record of any act of hers proceeding from base intention, or design to injure any being with whom she may have had relations. She looked to the world for pleasure, for happiness, gladly accepting whatever it gave her; not taking account of the evil things and the sorrow, which were heaped upon her in full measure. She grieved over her wrongs, but they did not spoil her lovely disposition; she never retaliated in kind. She even disassociated the act from the individual; not realizing, apparently, that evil may be inherent in a person, and took back into her service servants and maids who had slandered her.

This magnanimity, or rather absolute integrity of intention, subjected her to misunderstanding.

The voyage to Martinique was protracted but pleasant, and eventually she saw before her the hills above the valley of Sannois, and was welcomed by her parents to their humble dwelling. Nearly nine years had passed since she left Trois-Ilets, a careless, happy girl of sixteen; to return, divorced, the mother of two children worse than fatherless.

In the hearts of her parents she found that love and security for which she had hungered, and in the repose of La-Pagerie she took melancholy pleasure in revisiting the scenes of her childhood. In company with the young Hortense, she sought out the places hallowed to her by association : the bathing-pool, the flower-garden which she used to cultivate with her own hands ; visited with her the lowly huts of the slaves, and carried to them comfort and cheer ; explained to her the processes of sugar-making going on in the vast room under their dwelling.

The Vicomtesse remained entirely secluded, visiting her nearest neighbors, as M. and Madame Marlet, on the plantation adjoining ; on Sunday attending services at the little church in the *bourg*, a mile away, and, after the custom of that time, calling on the *curé*, at the presbytery. It is evident that this seclusion was very welcome to her, and that she contemplated a long residence here, with more of satisfaction than might have been expected in one who had tasted the pleasures of Paris. Still, her brief happiness there had been tempered by sorrow, and the recollection of it embittered by the cruelties of her husband. Had she but possessed the guardianship of Eugene, there at Trois-Ilets, it is doubtful if the calls from France could have tempted her to return. It is related that she again met the Carib sibyl who had prophesied her elevation to the throne of France, and who pointed out to her that while a portion of that prediction had been verified, yet there remained the greater height to which she was

to attain, and to reach which she was to return to France.

Be that as it may, she was not destined to remain long quiescent in the seclusion of Sannois de La-Pagerie. The premonitory mutterings of the gathering storm in France reached Martinique, and awakened quick response in the lively and turbulent Creole ; the island was soon in arms, faction fighting against faction. The convocation of the States-General aroused also the people of the colonies ; the demands of the people of France found an echo in Martinique, which, in common with Guadeloupe and Santo Domingo, was soon plunged into the horrors of civil strife. The new ideas were adopted with alacrity ; Fort Royal nominated as its first mayor the Baron de Tascher, Josephine's uncle, who was destined to take a prominent part in the approaching struggle. From January, 1790, until the close of the Revolution, Martinique was extremely agitated. The first collision occurred on the day of the *Fête Dieu*, 16th June, 1790, at the city of St. Pierre, between some whites and people of color, in which several of the latter were slain. As a matter of precaution, the ringleaders were arrested and confined in Fort Bourbon ; but popular sympathy being with them, they eventually seduced the soldiers guarding them, and possessed themselves of the fort. They turned the guns of the fort against the town, the governor retired within the walls of Fort St. Louis, and Baron de Tascher, sent to treat with the rebels, was made prisoner and held as a hostage.

The governor, fearing similar treatment at the hands of the garrison of Fort St. Louis, which seemed on the eve of revolt, fled to the heights of Gros Morne, where he rallied about him the inhabitants of the mountain region. Meanwhile, though several of her immediate family were taking an active part in the revolutionary movement, Mme. de Beauharnais resided peacefully at Sannois ; although greatly concerned, not only for her uncle, but on account of the news from France, where her husband had come to the front, in political affairs, and was then embroiled.

With all the ardor of his impulsive nature, Beauharnais now urged his wife to join him in Paris, being as anxious for a reconciliation as he was, some years before, for separation. Whatever may have moved him to this, there had been no change in his wife. She had ever kept alive the hope for reunion, although discouraged as to the prospect, and she lent a willing ear to his appeals. There is no doubt as to her attachment for the Viscount ; and, even though his harshness had dispelled the illusions of their first year of happiness, she still clung devotedly to their memory. Above all, she desired that the family might be reunited, in order to have her children and husband once more together. Her anxiety for their welfare, her tender solicitude for their future, impelled her to accede to his requests, and consent to seek him once again in Paris. She informed her parents of this decision, and one may imagine their reception of this unwelcome intelli-

gence, knowing as they did the unstable character of her spouse, and being cognizant of his many infidelities. Her mother, who had received her first-born with extreme gladness, and had hoped she would live with her always, entreated her to stay ; not to leave that habitation of peace to plunge into the dreadful vortex of the Revolution. The father, then suffering from the sickness that carried him to the grave, maintained a dignified silence, but he was pierced to the heart by her apparent ingratitude. In view of the brutal treatment she had received at his hands, and his insulting attitude towards her father and the entire family, this decision of Josephine's to return to her husband seemed to them inexplicable. Although one cannot but deprecate her attitude towards her parents, who had sacrificed so much for her welfare, yet one cannot withhold admiration at her courage and devotion to that which she seemed to consider her duty. The situation in Martinique was not devoid of danger, but was tranquil, compared to the condition of Paris, where, as frequent rumors indicated plainly to them, events were hastening to the inevitable and terrible catastrophe.

After the flight of the governor from Fort Royal, a revolutionary government was organized, a national guard formed, and another mayor chosen in the place of Baron de Tascher, still a prisoner in Fort Bourbon. There were four ships of war in the bay, the commander of which decided to sail for France, instead of mingling in the civil strife ; and learning that Mme. de Beauharnais desired to secure

a passage for the mother country, he offered her the hospitality of his flag-ship, "*La Sensible.*" He had often been a guest at La-Pagerie, and was but repaying a debt of hospitality in kind. Josephine gratefully accepted the offer, and hastened her preparations for departure. At last the signal was set for sailing; at the shore of Trois-Ilets were gathered all the friends of her youth; her father and mother, whom she was never to see again. The commander of the squadron had made his preparations so far as possible in secret, for fear of detention; and as it was, when the final signal was set, the revolutionists became alarmed and demanded that the fleet remain in the harbor. Word was instantly sent to Fort Bourbon, which trained its guns upon the flag-ship. The boat which had conveyed Josephine and Hortense from the shore was hastily taken on board, and the fleet set sail. From the guns of Fort Bourbon a rain of shot descended around the ships, in the midst of which they made their departure from the port. It was a strange fate which ordained that the Baron de Tascher should be compelled to witness his niece depart under fire from the guns of the fort in which he was confined a prisoner, and which her own father had aided to construct, twenty-eight years before. Yet it was so fated. The little fleet finally escaped beyond the range of the guns, and the Baron, as well as the anxious watchers at Trois-Ilets, had the melancholy satisfaction of seeing the ships disappear with full sails into the horizon.

Josephine's departure was in the month of Sep-

tember, 1790, and her arrival in France, and at Paris, where she was joyfully received by Beauharnais, followed in due course. The story so often related : that she returned on board a merchant vessel, and in great straits, not having means with which to pay for her passage, is refuted by the evidence of contemporary letters, which show that she, on the contrary, was the honored guest of the nation, and made her last voyage to France on a ship of the State. As she was there by invitation of its commander, the presumption is that her passage was free ; and that she was not impoverished is shown by the remittance at various times during her stay in Martinique, of the aggregate sum of 17,403 francs, to her aunt, in repayment of loans from that relative. Again, although the affairs of M. Tascher were not in a prosperous condition, still, what is known of his integrity and lofty character, forbids the assumption that he would allow his daughter and the heir to his estates, to return to her husband destitute.

This devoted parent, whose whole life had been one long struggle with untoward circumstances, finally succumbed to adverse fortune, and survived his daughter's departure less than two months.

He died from the disease with which he was suffering at the time of her visit, and which was doubtless aggravated by her abandonment, on the sixth of November, 1790, lamented by all who knew him in the colony. One year from that time, almost to a day, the only surviving child deceased, the young-

est sister of Josephine, Marie Françoise ; thus the aged mother was left alone, on that solitary estate among the hills of Trois-Ilets.

This mother appears to have been a woman of uncommon fortitude and elevated character. She lived here a life of seclusion, till her death in 1807, her latter years embittered by the recollection of filial ingratitude ; indifferent to the grandeur that surrounded her daughter after she had become the wife of Napoleon, and attended only by a single servitor.

Respecting her lonely life on the estate, there are some traditions extant, which show that it was not without its perils. She was waited upon by a foster-sister of Josephine, to whom the family had been particularly attached. This young woman expected to be set free, but not being manumitted at the expected time, she tried to murder Mme. Tascher, by putting pounded glass in a dish of peas she had prepared for her. Her mistress was warned only just in time, having raised the spoon to her lips. She strove to shield the girl, who confessed the intended crime, by sending her to the island of St. Thomas ; but was unable to save her life, the council condemning her to be burned alive. This was not an unusual sentence, in those barbarous times, just preceding the Revolution ; and the unfortunate girl suffered the horrible penalty.* See Appendix, 6.

* The foregoing is based upon the records of the La-Pagerie family, "*Archives de la Maison de Tascher*," upon the registers still extant in the city hall of Fort de France, and upon the traditions,

In her *Memoirs*, Josephine says:—"I had long ago entreated my mother to come and settle in France, and had held out to her the most flattering prospects. Napoleon himself had promised to receive her with the greatest distinction. 'I shall treat her nobly,' he said, 'and I am sure she will better sustain the honors of her rank than a certain lady of my household,'" Madame Letitia, who was very parsimonious. But Mme. de La-Pagerie would not accede to her daughter's wishes, and even if she did not prefer the quiet abode at Trois-Ilet, had many doubts as to the stability of Josephine's fortunes.

She once wrote her: . . . "While awaiting the pleasure of seeing you again, I confine myself to the preservation for you of a safe retreat from the

of the descendants of the La-Pagerie slaves. The author possesses a fac-simile copy of the marriage-register of Josephine's parents, and in the parish records of Trois-Ilets are the "Acts of Birth" and "Acts of Interment" of the Empress's sisters, as follows:—

"1763, July 27th. . . I have this day baptized a girl, aged five weeks, daughter in legitimate marriage of M. Joseph-Gaspard de Tascher, Chevalier Seigneur de La-Pagerie, and Mme. Marie-Rose Des Vergers de Sannois, its father and mother; she has been named Marie-Joseph-Rose," etc.

"Frère Emanuel, Capucin, Curé."

"1765, Jan. 21, Catherine Desirée, a daughter, born 11th Dec., preceding." 1767, April 6th, "Marie-Françoise, born 3d Sept., 1766." 1777, 16th Oct., "I have buried in the cemetery of this parish, the body of demoiselle Catherine Desirée de La-Pagerie, aged 13 years." 1791, 5th Nov. . . "I have buried in the cemetery of this parish, the body of Marie-Joseph-Rose," etc. This was a mistake in the name, that of the eldest daughter, Josephine, having been taken for that of the third, and youngest, Marie-Françoise. . .

tempests which environ you on every side. . . . Were you here, I should have nothing else to desire in the world. Oh, that I could once more press you to my heart, before death overtakes me." Seeing this letter, Napoleon is said to have remarked : . . . "I perceive that Madame de La-Pagerie, like myself, will permit no participation. She wants to reign alone. Very well ; I will some day establish her as a sovereign in America, and furnish her with a code of laws for the new nation."

Madame Tascher proudly refused all offers of assistance from the Empress, and even returned the diamonds which adorned a picture Josephine had sent her of herself. She kept the portrait, however, always before her, according it better treatment than one of the Emperor, which she hung in an unfrequented room, laughingly declaring that she was afraid of its influence over her.

At the time of her demise, when Josephine was at the height of her glorious career, the etiquette of Napoleon's court forbade her to wear mourning or to display any sign of grief, so she was compelled to dissemble her sorrow and mourn in secret this mother whose life had been devoted to her welfare from the time of her birth.

The mother of the Empress lived for many years in the chambers of what had been originally a wing of the "great-house," destroyed by a hurricane in 1766, and used as the kitchen. Here she died ; from this rude dwelling she was borne across the fields of the estate to the little church at Trois-



Statue of Josephine, Fort de France.

Ilets, where one may now find a tablet to her memory :

"*Ci-Git*"

THE VENERABLE MADAME
ROSE CLAIRE DUVERGER DE SANNOIS,
WIDOW OF MESSIRE J. G. TASCHER DE LA-PAGERIE,
MOTHER OF HER MAJESTY THE EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH,
DIED THE SECOND DAY OF JUNE, MDCCCVII.,
AT THE AGE OF LXXI. YEARS,
PROVIDED WITH THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

IN this little church at Trois-Ilets where Josephine and her sisters were baptized, all that was earthly of her sainted mother was laid at rest. In the cemetery adjoining, stretching down to the sea-side, are the graves of her two sisters and her father. And these are the remaining memorials, in that solitary place so far from the shores of France, of those who in life comprised the family of Josephine de La-Pagerie, one-time daughter of Martinique, and later Empress of the French.

Three miles away across the shining waters of Fort Royal Bay, stands a statue of Josephine, one of the most beautiful sculptures of modern times. On its pedestal are bas-reliefs representing the important events of her life, chief of which is the Coronation. The left hand of the Empress rests upon a medallion-portrait of Napoleon, in the right are gathered the folds of her robe, which drapes a figure majestic and graceful. The beautiful head is adorned with the crown which Bonaparte placed upon her brow ; the sweet face, with its expression of wistful

yearning, is turned toward La-Pagerie, the home of her childhood. Surrounding the statue are encircling palms, the glorious *oreodoxas*, natives of this island of Martinique.

And through the mists of time, we see her thus: her face turned wistfully to the happy home where her only peaceful years were passed, where alone she found surcease from the turmoil and the terrors of revolutionary France. That country may claim her, as closely identified with the career of the great Napoleon, but to America belongs the formative epoch of her life, when that character was shaped, which crystallized into the woman known and loved as JOSEPHINE.

CHAPTER XII.

A LOYAL SON OF FRANCE.

JOYFULLY received by the Viscount, Josephine was conducted to his house in the rue de l'Université, where she found herself in a different society from that she had left. During the next four years she was to live amid scenes for which her previous peaceful life at Martinique had by no means prepared her. She was at once plunged into the tumults of the Revolution ; but at the outset, and through all that trying period of strife, she conducted herself with a tact and sagacity that does her infinite credit. Surrounded as she was by people who played an important part in the regeneration of France, and often admitted to deliberations of the most important character, yet she never sought to play the rôle of politician ; which indeed was to her repugnant.

She was content to maintain the dignity of her salon, and to receive with graciousness the various guests who gathered for the discussion of political affairs. Among these were the Marquis de Lafayette, d'Aiguillon, de Crillon, d'André, d'Montesquieu, d'Biron ; in fact all the military aristocracy of the Constitutional party. The leaders, also, of

that party: Barnave, Chapelier, Mounier, Thouret, and many others. She was then but twenty-seven years of age, and still in the freshness of her youthful prime; light-hearted, animated, and with a polish of manner acquired by her intercourse with the best of Parisian society. Among the intimate friends of that time she could reckon some of the most distinguished representatives of the oldest families; as the Count de Montmorency, the devoted colleague of her husband in the Assembly; his relative and former colonel, the Duke de La Rochefoucauld; the Marquis de Caulaincourt; the Prince de Salm-Kirbourg, and the Princess de Hohenzollern.

Her aunt, Mme. de Renaudin, and the Countess Fanny de Beauharnais, were frequent visitors at the little house in University Street, and she had engaged a governess for Hortense, whose education was thus carried on under her own supervision, while at the same time Eugene was studying at the college of Louis le Grand. The sad news of the death of her father quickly followed her return to France, and in the midst of her grief she was called upon to witness, and not alone to witness but to participate in, a series of events which, while contributing to the overthrow of society, also vitally affected her own future. For three years henceforward, her own history is inextricably interwoven with that of her husband; the biography of the one is almost that of the other.

They were now cordially united, and, the one forgiving, the other remorseful, were equally de-



The Traveler's Tree and Shrine.

termined to bury the past in the grave of oblivion. Not even her children knew the extent of their father's dereliction.

Alexander de Beauharnais, a native by birth of Martinique, but early adopted by France, possessed, as we have seen, all the ardent nature of the tropical Creole, unchanged by transportation to a more temperate clime, and for many years undisciplined by adversities.

At the age of ten, in company with his elder brother and their preceptor, he was sent to Germany, where he passed two years at Heidelberg, then going to Blois, to live awhile with his maternal grandmother, the Countess de Chastulé. At the age of sixteen he entered the army, and was assigned to a regiment commanded by a cousin of his mother, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld. He was attentive to his duties and docile, but lively and imaginative, of a happy disposition and greatly liked by his comrades. His figure was elegant, his manners perfect, and he was noted for his stylish presence, even in a time of exquisite and elegant fashions.

Early in the year 1778, the regiment of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld was sent to Bretagne, with the intention of going to America, with Rochambeau ; but there is no evidence that the young officer accompanied that famous general who so materially aided Washington in his victories over the British. He sojourned a while at Brest, and was there advised of the death of Desirée de La-Pagerie.

The following year, 1779, he was united in marriage to Josephine; his subsequent career we have traced, until his return to France, after the ill-starred visit to Martinique, and finally the reconciliation.

Although by birth a scion of nobility, yet he was above all a patriot, and at the outbreak of the Revolution thought he could see in it the regeneration of France. He embraced the popular cause, and yet was a supporter of the constitutional party; wishing to reform, and not to destroy, still he was carried away by the revolutionary wave, though protesting, and aghast at the sanguinary consequences.

At the convocation of the Three Estates, in April, 1789, Beauharnais was elected a deputy by the nobles of Blois; but was among the first of his order to join the *tiers-état*. He was bold and outspoken, sometimes carried away by the ardency of his nature; but on the whole wise, and above all patriotic. He loved the army, and civic honors had no attraction for him, save as they contributed to the welfare of his country. While his wife was en-route to France, in 1790, he had courageously defended the conduct of the general commanding the army on the Rhine frontier, M. de Bouillé, for his stern repressal of the prætorian insurrection at Nancy, and in conjunction with Mirabeau had introduced a resolution into the assembly approving the general's course and complimenting him for his bravery. That same brave Bouillé, at one time

governor of Martinique, and who had wrested from English rule several of the Caribbean islands ; the "Bronze General," who had stood immovable for hours, with drawn sword, facing enraged soldiers of his command ; the determined loyalist, "the last refuge of the king" in his vain flight towards the frontier, in 1791 ; finally compelled to leave the country he had so long defended, to save his own life. The loyalty and the defection of Bouillé cast reflection upon his friends, and added to the sum of suspicions subsequently accumulated against Beauharnais. But nevertheless he defended him, loyal to the military, to his friends ; and still a patriot.

He was twice elected president of the Assembly, and at the flight of Louis XVI. in June, 1791, he found himself, by this defection of the king, "occupying the chief place in the nation." He was master of the situation, rose to the demands of the hour. The morning after the royal flight, he called the Assembly to order, and, with grave and serious air, stated that he had information to communicate of the greatest importance. He then informed his colleagues that the king and the royal family had fled, or had been abducted by enemies of the public safety. The confusion was tumultuous, the excitement intense ; but, during the heated debate that followed, and the terrible suspense as to the actions of the king and his retreat, during all the popular disturbances, Beauharnais presided over the deliberations of the National Assembly with dignity and firmness. He won the regard of all, and when he resigned his

high office, on the third of July, it was amid the enthusiastic plaudits of his colleagues. He was re-elected on the thirty-first, and under his presidency was accomplished the most important business of the Assembly : the revision, co-ordination, and definitive vote upon the new Constitution of France.

The discussion opened on the fifth of August, and after having given birth, as it were, to this Constitution—which, in the estimation of some, deserved to endure for centuries, but did not survive its projectors—the Assembly dissolved. Desirous of repose after his arduous duties, the Vicomte retired, with his wife and children, to the seclusion of his country retreat, the Ferté Beauharnais.

But the time for repose had not yet arrived. The suicidal acts of the French had enraged all Europe ; the gauntlet of war had been accepted ; the country was declared to be in danger, and the young men flocked to the camps, more attracted by the prospect of military glory than in love with fratricidal warfare.

The first armies sent to the frontier to repel the invaders were under the command of Luckner and Rochambeau, and to the command of the latter Beauharnais was attached. At the time of leaving the Ferté Beauharnais for the frontier, he wrote to his father, stating his desire to assist in restoring tranquillity to France, and in repelling the enemies of his country, and imploring his paternal sanction. This letter is dated the 17th January, 1792 ; his father responded duly, bestowing upon him his

blessing and approving his course. At the same time, his eldest son, François, was in the army of the Condé, opposed to the patriot army ; and he was classed as an *emigré* until the second consulate. Alexander was at once promoted to the rank of *Chef-d'etat Major*, under General Biron, and entered upon his duties with enthusiasm. Meanwhile, in order to comprehend clearly the course of events that led to his subsequent promotion and arrest, let us glance at a brief summary of revolutionary events.

As the world has known now for more than a century, the pressure of affairs had compelled the King of France, Louis XVI., to summon the nobles of his realm to his assistance. They met in February, 1787 ; but, unwilling to submit to a taxation of the privileged classes, in order to raise the revenue for meeting the enormous deficit, their assembly was dissolved in May. Two years later, yielding to the popular clamor, Louis convoked the States-General (1789)—the first assembling of the peoples' representatives since 1614. The result is known : that the remedy was worse than the disease ; the clergy and nobles refused to make any concessions to the *tiers-état ;* the people for the first time were convinced that they could conquer by force.

With Mirabeau's answer to the king's attempt at suppression :—" We are here by the power of the people, and we will not be driven hence save by the

power of the bayonet," the key-note of Revolution was sounded. The whole revolution, says Mme. de Staël, "was but audacity on the one side, and fear on the other." But it was the audacity of a long-suffering and outraged people, and the fear of a degenerate nobility. The "powder-tower about which unquenchable flame was smoldering" was at last on fire. In July took place the popular uprising of Paris, on the fourteenth of that month the attack on the Bastile; a national guard was formed and entrusted to the command of Lafayette; in August the Assembly enacted the abolishment of all feudal rights and privileges, and declared the "rights of man:" measures accepted by the king, with the right of suspensive veto; Oct. 5th witnessed the invasion of Versailles by the Paris mob and the next day the return of the king to the capital, at the mercy of the mob, barely held in check by Lafayette.

The year 1790, February, the king appeared in the Assembly, and on the fourteenth of July, he took oath to support the new constitution. On that date took place what Carlyle has termed the "great swear," when, on the Champ de Mars, the President of the National Assembly swore (*je le jurê*) to support the king and the constitution; the people—all France, swore, to the remotest province, as spontaneously as the preceding, and succeeding, outbreaks had spread.

This year saw the rise of the revolutionary giants: Danton, Marat, Mirabeau, Desmoulins, and many

others, who led the movement awhile, then fell beneath the axe of the guillotine. Upon the frontier the *emigrés* were gathering, and the coalition of the Powers was being formed for the invasion of France. The death of Mirabeau, in April, 1791, destroyed whatever hope the king may have derived from his anticipated defection; the cause of monarchy was lost, and he essayed to escape from France by flight, on the 20th of June. He was intercepted at Varennes, when almost within sight of the frontier, where Bouillé was awaiting him, to conduct him within the lines of the *emigrés*. The king was taken back to Paris, and Bouillé crossed the frontier, narrowly escaping with his life.

The Assembly was now supreme, the king officially dead, although by the constitution of September, that year, he was nominally the executive and still held the power of suspensive veto. This power he undertook to assert in the veto of the measures of the next legislative assembly, declaring the *emigrés* guilty of high treason, and against the recalcitrant priests. The flame of insurrection had extended to the colonies of France, especially in the West Indies, where the blacks of Hayti and Santo Domingo were committing atrocious massacres. The situation there may be given in a sentence, in the reply of the chief Ogé, to one of the white judges:—Taking some black powder in his hand, he spread over it a quantity of flour, saying: "Now they are white." Shaking his hand, then opening it, he said: "Where now are the whites?—*Ou sont les Blancs?*"

In the midst of these alarms, how many times must it have occurred to Josephine, thinking of her mother and relatives, in far-distant Martinique : Where now are the whites ?

At the opening of the year 1792, the Girondists were in power ; an army of 160,000 men was raised by vote of the Assembly, and in April war was declared against Austria ; the conflict of France with the outside powers was fairly begun, not to end for twenty years, and until nearly two million of her sons perished upon the battle-field. Again and again, the hydra-headed populace rose to the surface of affairs and compelled both King and Assembly to listen. Armed with pikes, on the twentieth of June, a mob broke into the royal palace, in defiance of national guards ; on the tenth of August, the insurrection occurred which drove Louis from the Tuileries into the arms of the assembly, and ended in the massacre of the Swiss guard. Thenceforth a prisoner, the king was dead to the people ; stripped of power, a monarch without a crown.

The country had been declared in danger, in July, and an appeal sent forth for an universal uprising to repel the Prussian invaders, then rapidly advancing. The country responded as one man, from center to circumference being in violent agitation, armed and alert. The proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, hastening to the release of the king, sealed the fate of both king and ci-devant nobility. The property of the *emigrés* had already been seized ;

now their lives were in danger, even though they might have declared for France, and were fighting for their country against the invaders. They were declared "suspects," or under suspicion of conspiring against the welfare of the country. By "suspect," their orders of arrest explained, with diabolical vagueness, is meant all who "by their manner, by their family relations or connections, by their speech or writings, have shown themselves partisans of tyranny and the enemies of liberty; particularly all the *ci-devant* nobles, their wives, mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, brother or sisters; as well as all agents of *emigrés*, who have given constant proof of their attachment to royalty." Comprehensive enough, in sooth, and few escaped the clutches of the revolutionary hell-hounds, who had not already sought safety over the frontiers. Even Lafayette, the popular idol, who had so ably controlled the mobs of Paris, after being sent to the front, where he won several victories over the Austrians, was summoned back by the Jacobins to stand trial, which meant death, and to escape which he fled across the frontier and into the arms of the Austrians, who kept him five years a prisoner in loathsome dungeons. Like Lafayette, a patriot-noble, Beauharnais served well in the army; like him, also, he was summoned, in due season, to answer charges of treason. "In the beginning of 1789, a splendor and terror still surrounded the nobility. The conflagration of their chateaus, kindled by months of obstinacy, went out after the fourth of

August, and might have continued out, had they at all known what to defend, and what to relinquish as indefensible."

Repeated reports of Prussian advance and French losses filled the populace with fury, causing them to commit the most terrible excesses, and culminating in the massacres of the second of September, when bodies of armed men broke into the prisons where the suspects were confined, and murdered above a thousand in cold blood, among them many priests, and women of gentle birth, as the Princess de Lamballe, one "beautiful, good, who yet had known no happiness," who was hacked to pieces, and her head fixed on a pike, that Marie Antoinette might see it. The September massacres of St. Bartholomew, two hundred years before, found almost a parallel in these, when innocence and beauty were sacrificed to insensate rage, and daughters saved their fathers only by drinking the blood of aristocrats.

With what sorrow and shudderings must the Beauharnais have heard of this hell-carnival, in which friends went down to death, and some of their own relatives were killed. The good Duke de Rochefoucauld, who had been as a second father to Alexander, was murdered in the presence of his wife and aged mother, his blood bespattering their cheeks. His nephew, the Count Charles de Rohan-Chabot, an intimate friend of the family, was murdered at the abbey; and thus the tale might be told, but could not then be uttered, from fear that the next "suspect" might be one of themselves.

The desperate valor of the French army under Dumouriez finally turned the advance of the Prussians into a retreat, and the country breathed more freely; but did not relax its persecution of the suspects. In the newly-elected national convention of the 21st September the more violent of the agitators, the Jacobins, were in the ascendant, their section, known as the "Mountain," and representing the extremists, far out-numbering the moderates, or Girondists. On September 25th France was proclaimed a republic, and in December proceedings were instituted against the king which resulted in a sentence of death. Thus, in the course of the year 1792, Paris had accomplished the humiliation of royalty; the downfall of the aristocracy; the elevation of the Jacobins to power, with the corresponding defeat of the Girondists; and the proclamation of the republic.

We have little information of the movements of Mme. de Beauharnais, during this sad and eventful year. Accustomed, however, from infancy, to regard the sovereigns with respect, even with reverence, she could not but have been profoundly affected by their misfortunes, and have wept over their unhappy fate. At the same time, she was rejoiced that her husband was remote from the center of sanguinary civil strife and the terrible guillotine; though well aware that he was not beyond the reach of their enemies.

It is a matter of regret that we do not possess the correspondence of husband and wife, during this

period, when trouble and sorrow, shared in common, must have brought their hearts very close together in mutual sympathy.

The execution of the king, on the 20th of January, 1793, brought upon France the execrations of the world, hastened the movements of the coalition, provoked the royalist insurrection of the Vendée, and filled the distracted country with dissensions. But it united the party in the ascendant, which took to itself the credit of the French successes on the frontiers, and gave birth to the revolutionary tribunal and the terrible "Committee of Safety," invested with absolute power over the lives and property of the people. Ingratitude and suspicion could go no farther than it was carried by this central tribunal, which rewarded bravery with insult and contumely, and patriotism by dishonor and death. The brave Custine, who had succeeded to Brion, after his great successes in the Palatinate, had been compelled to withdraw into French territory, leaving behind him twenty thousand French invested in Mayence. The committee at once recalled him, and gave the command to Beauharnais, who, at the age of thirty-three, found himself General-in-Chief of the Army of the Rhine.

He was charged with the onerous task of retrieving the territory lost by his predecessor, at the same time he was hampered by the commands of the terrible Committee, which not only presumed to dictate his movements, but to prescribe victories, without furnishing him the men and material of

war. The General did not dissimulate to Josephine the gravity of his situation, of which she was fully aware from her own observation. His appointment was confirmed in May ; in June the leaders of the Girondists were arrested by the Jacobins, and Beauharnais, as a sympathizer with their party and principles, was suspected. Still, he hoped by feat-of-arms to earn the gratitude of his country and save his family from ruin, and had confidence that the rectitude of his course would be recognized. In this confidence his wife did not share, as is shown by her attempt to provide for the safety of their children, by committing them to the care of the Princess de Hohenzollern, who, with her brother, had formed the project of taking refuge in England. In anticipation of this event, the children spent several days with the Princess at her residence in Artois, and a letter has been preserved, written at this time to Hortense.

"My Dearest Daughter :—

"Thy letter gave me great pleasure, my dear Hortense. I am sensible of thy regrets at being separated from your mamma, my child ; but it is not for a long time, for I expect the Princess to return in the spring, when we shall again be together. . . I love my darling little Hortense, with all my heart. . . Embrace Eugène for me.

"Thy loving mother,

"Josephine de Beauharnais."

Josephine had acted without consulting her husband, who, on learning of the proposed departure, and in

view of the effect such an act would have upon the Committee, despatched a courier with an order for detention. The Princess, having no one to whom she could entrust the children, herself took them to Paris, to Mme. de Renaudin ; and, by this circumstance, being prevented from leaving the country at the time intended, caused a delay that was fatal to her brother, the Prince.

The Marquis was then residing at Fontainebleau, where Mme. de Beauharnais was a frequent visitor ; though she did not dare absent herself from her house in Paris, owing to her conspicuous position as the wife of the General of the Army of the Rhine.

Beauharnais gave all his energies to the reorganization of his army and the perfection of its discipline, with such success that he was complimented even by the Committee. He had before him the herculean task of the deliverance of Metz from the Prussian besiegers, who were commanded by the ablest generals, and the King of Prussia in person. Before assuming the defensive, he addressed a long and diffuse proclamation to his soldiers, breathing of ardor and patriotism ; but in striking contrast to the terse, energetic and burning appeals of Bonaparte, as at Arcole and Rivoli. He was inspired with the highest motives, but in vain ; the stronghold capitulated before his army could reach it, and his command was only saved by a rapid and well-executed retrograde march to the strong position he had left. The capitulation was denounced by the committee as infamous, and the failure to re-

lieve the besieged as treachery. As a defeated general, as a *ci-devant*, and a former Girondist, Beauharnais could not be regarded by the tribunal as other than a "suspect." His resignation was accepted, his offer to serve his country in a subordinate capacity was refused, and he was ordered at once to Paris. Josephine had kept him informed of the sentiment, constantly increasing, adverse to the employment of the *ci-devant* in command ; but his love of country impelled him to the offer of service in any capacity.

On the 25th of August, 1793, the reunited family retired to their country place, instead of fleeing from the dangers that menaced them. By retiring into the country, Beauharnais only anticipated by a few days the orders of the Committee, promulgated on the 5th of September, commanding all the military *noblesse*, who had resigned or been deposed, to retire to their homes, at a distance from Paris, under the most extreme penalties. . . .

On the 17th of September, was issued the stringent order against the "suspects," by which the clergy and the nobility were placed under ban, and the prisons and houses of detention filled to overflowing with prospective victims of the guillotine. Even the buoyant nature of Alexander de Beauharnais could not blind him to the fact that the reign of terror had begun ; he and his family were under suspicion.

CHAPTER XIII.

"TERROR THE ORDER OF THE DAY."

THE Terror was upon this devoted family; like a surging billow, increasing as it roared and rolled, it had invaded and submerged all France. Under such a terrible menace as the decree of the suspects, no person of distinction could rest secure within the bounds of the republic; but Beauharnais, possessing the esteem and love of his neighbors, counted upon their protection. This is shown in a letter, copied by the hand of Josephine, in answer to a testimonial from the inhabitants of Blois, welcoming to their midst one who had given his best years to the service of his country. Towards the end of the month (September, 1793), these people, wishing perhaps to shield him from the Committee, and to testify their esteem, chose him mayor of their commune. Mme. de Beauharnais, who was not yet forbidden to visit the capital, sought to engage in her husband's behalf such persons now in influence as would protect one who, though content to be relegated to obscurity, still scorned to fly. At this time, the old Marquis and Mme. de Renaudin resided at Fontainebleau, and Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais in Paris, with her daughter, the wife of Alexander's

eldest brother, who was in the army of the Condé. By his defection he had placed the lives of all his relatives in danger—father, brother, wife, mother and sister-in-law—by the definition of the Decree, an entire family of "suspects."

It had needed only the execution of the king, to let loose the passions of the lower classes and unchain the fury of the Jacobins. The moderates had long since given way to the extremists, and must now reckon with Marat and Robespierre, who could not obtain victims enough, who could not shed blood enough, to quench their diabolical thirst. All power was now centralized in the so-called Committee of Public Safety, which every day was hauling before them the friends and acquaintances of the Beauharnais.

The suspected family saw its own fate impending, but could not escape, for the flight of one would but precipitate the catastrophe. In agony of heart, but outwardly calm, Josephine and her husband gave their attention to their duties at the Ferté Beauharnais, and each night felt grateful that they could gather beneath their own roof-tree an united family. The General devoted himself entirely to his office, which, though an inferior one, he allowed to absorb all his time. At last, the first blow fell, in the imprisonment of the wife of the *emigré*, on the third of November. Her mother, Madame Fanny, counted upon her friendship with a secretary of the Commune, to protect her; but his influence could not extend to the daughter. More and more critical

became their position; faster and faster fell the sharp blade of the guillotine.

The year 1793 was to be a memorable one; the first month witnessed the head of a king fall "as a gage of battle" at the feet of the enemies of the republic; in July, a fairer head was severed: that of Charlotte Corday, that "stately Norman figure, of beautiful, still countenance," who killed Marat, "one man to save a hundred thousand; a villain to save innocents; a savage beast, to give repose to my country." Alas! vain sacrifice of a noble life; it was not Marat, but one silent behind him, the inexplicable Robespierre, she should have slain. In October, another, more famous, equally guiltless of actual crime, equally unfortunate, the hapless discrowned queen, Marie Antoinette, whose head was sheared away by the relentless guillotine, on the sixteenth of the month. To complete this trio of French heroines, add another shining figure: the ninth of November, Madame Roland, led to execution from Charlotte Corday's cell. "Noble white vision, with its high queenly face, its soft proud eyes, long black hair floating down to the girdle, and as brave a heart as ever beat in womanly bosom. . . . Like a white Grecian statue, serenely complete, she shines in that black wreck of things, long memorable." Who was refused a pen to "write the strange thoughts" rising in her.

"O Liberty, what strange things are done in thy name! . . ."

The last day of October was the last day of life

on earth for the twenty-two Girondists, guillotined in a body: "Samson's axe is rapid—one head per minute. . . . They attempt the Marseillaise; the chorus so rapidly wearing weak—the chorus has died out." But not in the hearts of the people; their death hastened the downfall of the arch-fiend: Robespierre already trembles for his security.

"*Ça ira; la guillotine ne va pas mal.*" Give them time enough, they will devour each other, these cannibals; but before the end comes, how many innocent shall perish! . . . During the last months of the year the persecution of the military nobles, which had begun with Custine, was continued, until more than twenty generals were under arrest, most of whom paid with their lives their devotion to the infernal "republic." Among them, Houchard, guillotined the 16th of November; Luckner and Brion, on the first day of the new year, 1794; nearly all of Beauharnais' military companions and former commanders; and finally the Vicomte himself. He had been a colleague of Houchard, had served under Brion; in short, neither his inestimable services as Commander of the Army of the Rhine, his popularity as mayor of his commune, the influence of his wife, nor the vigilance of his aunts, could save him from arrest. He was noble, he had been a member of the constituent assembly, he was a moderate, he was the brother of an *emigré*; he was, if any, qualified for a "suspect." Denounced before the local committee, he was arrested at Ferté, taken to the prisons of the Luxembourg,

where he found many of his old comrades, also victims to the ingratitude of the republic—than which no ingratitude can be baser. Custine had already perished : one who "had fought in America : a proud brave man ; and his fortune led him *hither !*" Beauharnais was arrested in January, 1794. That month the houses of detention and prisons held 4,600 victims ; in March 5,800 ; at the beginning of April 7,500 ; at the end of April 8,000 ; "crowded to the ridge-poles" with "suspects."

"The 44,000 committees, like so many companies of reapers and gleaners gleaning France, are gathering their harvest and storing it in these houses of detention." No one attainted of royalty escaped, who had not already fled from this country accursed. In November had fallen the head of Philippe d'Orleans Egalité, the last remaining of notable royalty, though professing himself a republican. It was in that same bloody November," says Carlyle, in his revolutionary rhapsody, "that two notable prisoners were added : Dame Dubarry and Josephine Beauharnais. Dame whilom Countess Dubarry, unfortunate female, had returned from London ; they snatched her, not only as ex-harlot of a whilom Majesty, and therefore 'suspect,' but as having furnished emigrants with money. Contemporaneously with whom there comes the wife of Beauharnais, soon to be the widow : she that is Josephine Tascher Beauharnais ; that shall be Josephine Empress Bonaparte,—for a black divineress of the Tropics prophesied, long since, that she should be a

Queen, and more. . . . In that same hour perished poor Adam Lux of his love for Charlotte Corday." Rhapsody sometimes leads the rhapsodist astray, as in this instance, when the great Carlyle mistook the wife of the *emigré* for that of the younger brother. Misery enough Josephine endured, and soon enough the door of the prison closed upon her ; but it was in April, not in November, that she followed her husband to the detention-house.

Her husband arrested, Josephine displayed a courage and energy that might seem foreign to her soft and indolent Creole nature ; did we not know that in the crucial tests of life, this same Creole nature has often risen to sublimest heights of heroism and self-sacrifice. Far from seeking her own safety in flight, which she might have done, she devoted all her time to efforts for his liberation : writing letters, soliciting those in power, with prayer and entreaty ; she neglected nothing ; yet was all in vain. Alexander Beauharnais, *ci-devant* noble, a general of the army, and a gentleman, was too great a prize to be permitted to escape the clutches of the *canaille.*

She was not surprised, for she had realized that nothing short of a miracle could save her from arrest, when, on the twentieth of April, the minions of Robespierre seized and carried her to prison. Her chief concern was for her children, suddenly deprived of her protection, left alone and unattended, who for several days were at the mercy of their enemies. Hortense was but eleven and Eugène only twelve, but they displayed a courage commend-

able and unusual, in the cruel circumstances surrounding them. Finally they were found by their relatives, the Countess Fanny and the Aunt Renaudin, who cared for them while their mother was in prison. But for weeks Josephine was in doubt and her heart torn with anxiety. As she crossed the threshold of the Carmelite prison, still stained with the blood of the September victims, she shuddered with dread for the future, yet more from apprehension for those dearer to her than life. The end, she believed, was near; yet she sustained herself with courage, for the sake of those looking to her for assistance, in this the most trying hour of her life. The General obtained a transfer to the Convent, but was confined in a different quarter, as is shown by two letters, written respectively by father and mother, to their children. These letters are full of affection, of hope, yet necessarily guarded in expression, as the spies of the Committee were on every side. The mother's is dated from the Prison of the Carmelites, 28th April, 1794, and is addressed to Hortense, probably conveyed to her by some sympathizing friend:—

"MY DEAR LITTLE HORTENSE:

"It pains me so to be separated from thee and my dear Eugène: I think of my darling children constantly, continually, whom I love and now embrace, with all my heart. JOSEPHINE."

Equally tender, but longer, was the letter sent by the General. Few opportunities were afforded for

correspondence with their dear ones ; the days dragged dismally away, hopeless, cheerless, unrelieved by news from them.*

The day of Josephine's incarceration witnessed the execution of fourteen magistrates of the Paris parliament ; on the next the fatal cart carried to the scaffold the Duc de Villery, the Admiral d'Estaing, the former minister of war, and the Comte de la Tour du Pin ; on the 22d, perished d'Espremeuil, and other members of the constituent assembly, while in the same death-cart were the venerable Malesherbes and his sister, the Marquis de Chateaubriand and his wife, the Duchesse de Châtelet and Grammont. The rumble of the death-carts was continuous, and many of the old friends of the Beauharnais were in these days sent to the guillotine. What hope could there be for them, under the shadow of suspicion, allied to the most distinguished of the victims ; and what road lay before them other than that leading direct to the scaffold ? It was not solely the brave officer of the army, martyr to his principles, who had fought vainly for the republic, who was made a victim of injustice ; but every other person whose name was a reminder of the monarchic régime.

Companions with Josephine in captivity were

* Very few letters have been preserved, of those which were conjecturally written, at this and the period immediately preceding. Those published in the "Memoires et Correspondance de l'Impératrice Joséphine, particularly, were subsequently denounced by Eugène. Some bear the impress of authenticity ; but are probably *ex post facto.*

some of the noblest of the women of France : as the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, who shared with her the narrow cell once occupied by a sister of the order. Another, at first not prominent, but who eventually was the means of their being restored to freedom, was a certain beautiful woman of Spanish birth, Mme. de Fontenoy, suspected mistress of one of the Committee. Here in this gloomy prison the sweet and sympathetic character of Josephine won all hearts, for she was always true to herself, under whatever adversity of fortune. "Benevolent to her inferiors, amiable to her equals, polite to those who assumed to be her superiors, she won the affectionate regard of all her companions in affliction."

On the ninth of May, 1794, Eugène and Hortense, then aged respectively twelve and eleven, addressed a naïve and pathetic letter to the Committee, imploring the release of their mother, whom they declared innocent of any intention of harm, and absolutely necessary to their existence.

To this petition the callous "*citoyens*" turned a deaf ear, and they remained motherless at Fontainebleau, with their aunt and the Marquis. Tradition has it that Eugène was apprenticed to a joiner, and Hortense to a seamstress, during the period of their mother's incarceration ; but the most authentic history of their lives does not refer to this. It is more probable that they were left in charge of their relatives, who consoled them so far as possible for their loss of father and mother.

Meanwhile, the guillotine ceased not its work of

death; its daily victims could now be counted by scores, even as high as fifty and sixty at a time being sent to fall beneath the glittering steel. "Soon," said the infamous Fouquier-Tinville, rubbing his hands with savage glee, "soon, we will vacate all the prisons and put up over their doors, 'houses to let.' The guillotine works well; the heads are falling like slates from a roof." They were falling; but, soon after the opening of the year 1794, other heads than those of priests, innocent women, and nobles, were brought beneath the axe. For dissension had appeared within the commune itself: there can be but one Lucifer in the infernal regions; there was room for but one Robespierre in this hell-vortex of the revolution. Even the Hébretists, the *enragés*, the enraged extremists, incurred the displeasure of their chief, and twenty of them perished on the 24th of March. Danton, the lion of the Cordeliers, and Desmoulins, were the next to fall, the first week in April, leaving supreme the terrible triumvirate, Robespierre, Couthon and St. Just. But, even as Danton before his death had predicted, his downfall carried with it all the others. Like a tree of the tropical forest, bound to its companions by an inextricable network of lianes, the giant in his fall dragged to the ground all those about him, enmeshed as they were in their innumerable crimes. Not one head could be lopped off here, and another there: all must be severed; the last one must expiate his fiendish deeds, before the tribunal of outraged justice.

The "men of terror," tigers caged in their crimes, raged among themselves; their cruelties redoubled, their horrors accumulated. Carnot, one of the committee, finds his own name among the list of "suspects." Who then can be exempt? Only by striking off the head of the dictator can the rest even hope for reprieve. His doom is sealed, yet how accomplish it, how drag forth the tiger in his lair? Only desperation can do this; only an arm nerved by love of life, or love of *love*, can send the dagger to the heart of the tyrant. It is there, in the convention; it is wielded by one Tallien, a man steeped in deeds of blood, yet having heart enough to be in love,—with a fair "suspect,"—that same Madame Fontenoy, friend and fellow-prisoner of Josephine.

His mistress is in durance; she urges him to give her liberty, for the death-axe is suspended over her, and he dares. Dagger in hand, he denounces the tyrant; stems the tide, turns it against the arch-fiend, Robespierre, who is decreed "accused."

He is arrested; escapes; is driven to bay, and shoots himself through the jaw; but the next day the death-tumbrils bear him and his fellow-conspirators to the guillotine. As Samson lifts his mangled head to the view of the populace, a mighty shout announces that the man-of-blood has fallen; the tryant is dead. Paris, and France breathe more freely now; the suspects in the prisons may rejoice, for they will soon be set at liberty.

But there is one ear deaf to the shouts of an emancipated people; one whose fortunes we are follow-

ing, to whom the death of Robespierre conveyed no import. Three days previously, Alexandre de Beauharnais had met his fate ; the twenty-eighth of July, was a date now meaningless to him. The star of Beauharnais had set. Five days before he had been taken before the dread Tribunal. He was accused of nothing except he was guilty of bearing an aristocratic name. Foredoomed, and aware of his impending fate, yet he defended himself with ability, confounding his accusers, refuting their accusations, in vain ; he was condemned to death.

He was returned to prison, whence, the day before his death, he indited a last letter to his wife, bidding her farewell, expressing sentiments of the most exalted patriotism, of conjugal affection, of paternal solicitude : "Night of the 6th Thermidor, Year 2 (July 24th, 1794), . . . Yet some moments to tenderness, to tears and to regrets, then wholly to the glory of my fate, to the grandest thoughts of immortality. When you receive this letter, my Josephine, your husband will have ceased to live. . . . Thy generous soul pardoned the moment that sorrow overtook me. . . . What thanks do I owe to Providence, who, I trust, will bless thee. . . . Now Heaven disposes of me before my time ; and even this is one of its mercies. . . . I have just undergone a cruel formality : my hair has been cut off. I have contrived to purchase back a lock of it, that I may bequeath to my wife and to my children this last pledge of my affection, of my last recollection. I feel that at this thought my heart is breaking,

and my tears bedew the paper. Farewell, all that I love! Love each other, speak often of me; and never forget that the glory of dying the victim of tyrants, the martyr of freedom, ennobles the scaffold."

He carried to the scaffold the same lofty disdain for death that had distinguished him in his attacks upon the enemies of his country. Regret at leaving behind him his dearest and most beloved, the prey to faction and at the mercy of his deadliest enemies, caused him the greatest pain. In the fatal death-cart he grasped the hand of a single friend,—but with what feelings may be imagined—that of the Prince of Salm-Kirbourg, who had risked and lost his life by returning to Paris with the children of Beauharnais.

Thus perished, on the 24th of July, 1794, at the age of thirty-four, Alexandre de Beauharnais, first husband of Josephine, father of the Prince Eugène and Queen Hortense.

A generous heart, a proud and lofty spirit; above all, a man honest and sincere; by his premature death his country lost a great military genius, who would have skillfully combated her enemies.

Carried away by the impetuosity of youth, impatient of even the slight restraint of his married life, he had grossly wronged the noble companion Heaven had bestowed upon him. But, so far as possible, in the four years preceding his death, he had reclaimed himself; had endeavored to atone for his misdeeds, by a devotion that lasted even to

the foot of the scaffold. On her part, she had not only pardoned him, but ever strove to conceal his conduct during the years of their separation, from his children. They knew him only as high-minded and honorable, and as such cherished his memory.

Although apprehensive of the worst, yet Josephine was not aware of his death until she saw it published in the daily bulletin of victims, two days afterwards. She had hoped till then ; but this frightful blow stretched her upon the prison floor unconscious.

It was hours before she recovered consciousness ; then she accepted with apparent calmness the inevitable decree, and prepared herself for a similar fate, which, she had reason to believe, would not be long delayed.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

THE Terror ended with the downfall of Robespierre and the Tribunal, but the horror of it lasted many weeks and months, even years. The popular agitation extended itself to the houses of detention, where the prisoners felt the great change in the air, but could only for a while divine what had happened. Many of them were already under sentence of death, seventy were marked for execution on the very morning that Robespierre perished. Among those who had received the "act of accusation" condemning her to the scaffold, was Josephine; but, stupefied with the horror of her husband's death, and benumbed by despair, she was unable to read it. Her companions gathered around her. "At first a mournful silence, the calmness of hopeless woe, was the only sentiment manifested towards me;" but at last they broke out into lamentation of her fate. Her companions' cries awoke her from the stupor of grief and, true to the sentiment of self-abnegation which ever inspired her, she endeavored to cheer those who were condemned to perish with her. She even forced a smile to her wan countenance and recalled the oracle of the Mar-

tinique prophetess, reminding them that, in many particulars, it had been fulfilled, and that she firmly believed in its consummation. "What, *I* condemned to death?" she said with a mournful smile. "Have no fear, my friends. Do you not know, I am yet to be a queen of France:—*Je serai reine de France.*" And, turning to her intimate companion, Mme. d'Aiguillon, she added: "I will appoint you my *dame d'honneur*," a promise she fulfilled when raised to the throne; but an appointment which Napoleon would not sanction.

This sally was an inspiration of despair, which for a while revived her drooping spirits; but how could hope sustain itself in the face of the too evident preparations for her execution? The brutal jailer entered the cell occupied by herself and Mme. d'Aiguillon, saying he had come to take Josephine's bed away, for the use of another prisoner. "How now," said the duchess, lightly, "are you going to give her a better one?" "No, no," said the brute, with a significant gesture, "not at all; she will not need another very soon." It was the 9th Thermidor; the fall of the men of terror had been accomplished; but in the prisons, where the occupants were in ignorance of what was transpiring outside, reigned dark despair. Even Josephine had resigned herself to the belief that her end was near, and, anticipating the brutal office of the executioner, had cut off locks of her hair to be sent to her children, as a last momento of their loving mother. She had not seen them for many days, and had been granted only one brief

interview with her husband, two days before his execution, when, their hearts bursting with grief, these two met in a last embrace. His last thoughts were of her, hers of their children, and she wrote them a letter of farewell, to be delivered after she should have ceased to live. In this pathetic message she says :—"My last sigh will be one of tenderness, and I hope my last words may prove a lesson. Time was when I could impart sweet instruction ; but the present will not be the less useful, that it has been given in the season of calamity." But her destiny was not so soon to be accomplished ; her end was not yet come ; from the profoundest depths of despair she was to rise to the pinnacle of supreme fortune.

One of her companions, looking through the grated window of her cell, saw a woman in the street making signs to her. When the woman noted that she was observed she seized her robe significantly. For a moment she was at a loss to grasp the meaning of this pantomime, then she nodded : "Robe" was the word the woman meant to convey. Seeing that she was understood, she stooped and picked up a stone : "*Pierre*—Robespierre !" It dawned upon the prisoner that something eventful had occurred to the arbiter of their fate, and she awaited breathlessly the next development.

The woman threw the robe from her violently, at the same time dashing the stone to the ground. It flashed upon the prisoner : Robespierre had fallen ; the woman drew her hand across her neck ; he had

been guillotined! The joyful suspect hastened to communicate the glad news, and soon the prison was in a tumult; reprieved from death, with life and all its joys now opening out before them, the prisoners fell into each other's arms, wept and sang. The intelligence so strangely conveyed to them was soon confirmed by the altered behavior of their jailers; the next morning they were free.

Among the first to be released, Josephine sought out her children, pressed them to her bosom in a delirium of joy, and bedewed them with her tears. The fear of re-arrest was not absent, and she hastened to Fontainebleau, where she was soon joined by her sister-in-law, the wife of the *emigré*, and where she remained for several months. The family was reunited, the only absent member the viscount, whose memory Josephine mourned sincerely, in the privacy of her retirement. She had long since forgiven him his infidelities and his neglect; she only remembered his devotion during the past four years, his constancy to truth, his heroic death.

Here ends the first and most tragical period of Josephine's existence, when she was left a widowed mother, at the age of thirty-one. She was in the prime of early womanhood, her youth a memory, the future dark before her. Of this period of her life which we have scanned, biographers and historians have given us few details; but it would appear

that it was not the least interesting; for it is the prelude to the second chapter of her career, which finds her name intimately associated with that of the greatest in the history of France. Henceforth, after a brief period of gloom, we shall find her fortune growing brighter and more brilliant, as we trace her successive steps to fame, as the wife of General Bonaparte, consort of the First Consul, and finally Empress of the French; but in whatever station, she will be always found true to herself.

Although most of the biographers of Josephine pass abruptly from the death of her first husband to her marriage with General Bonaparte, thus leaving a gap of nearly two years in her life unnoticed, still, these two years, though the least known, are not to be overlooked. Viewing their many omissions and misstatements, we might with truth assume that she had been peculiarly unfortunate in her biographers, some of them having been entirely ignorant of the circumstances of her early life, and others unreliable in their accounts of her first acquaintance with the great Napoleon. Even in later life, she has been subjected to misstatement and misapprehension of motive, especially by her English biographers, who have allowed their hatred of Bonaparte to extend to all with whom he was brought into intimate contact. They have neglected few opportunities to disparage Napoleon, and to insult his virtuous consort.

One of the first acts of Mme. de Beauharnais, after finding herself at liberty, was to announce the

fact to her sorrowing mother, so long kept in suspense, so long torn with doubts as to the safety of her daughter, in distant Martinique.

While apprehensive as to the fate of her child, during the Reign of Terror, Madame de La-Pagerie herself narrowly escaped being submerged in the tide of civil strife that desolated her native island. Animated by the same sanguinary principles that prevailed in France, Royalists and Republicans fought each other as fiercely as in the mother-country, and the fair land was bathed in blood. The troops were under command of the governor, Rochambeau, who offered to Mme. de La-Pagerie, as the mother-in-law of one of the generals of the republic, a refuge at the fort. But this the mother of Josephine would not accept, although there had been an attack upon the quarter of Trois-Ilets, in June, 1793; and she remained upon the plantation.

The estates adjoining were ravaged and the great houses burned, but Sannois de La-Pagerie was protected by both contending parties. In the midst of the civil war, the English, taking advantage of the disturbed condition of the island, attacked Fort Royal, finally compelling Rochambeau to surrender, though after a most desperate defense. Among those liberated on parole, with the privilege of retiring to their plantations, was the Baron de Tascher, Josephine's uncle, who thus followed the course pursued by her father, some thirty years before, and two years before her birth. This was in 1794. The English being not only masters of the island but of the

ocean, correspondence between Martinique and the home country was extremely precarious, many letters being intercepted, and lost forever to their intended recipients. This will account for the absence from the family archives of any reply to the first letter or letters, written by Josephine to her mother. Four months after her deliverance, or on the 20th of November, 1794, she addressed another letter to her mother, trusting to a more prosperous fortune than had attended its predecessors, and this missive is still in existence. It is superscribed :—"To the widow La-Pagerie, on her estate at Trois-Ilets, island of Martinique," and in it, after explaining that it was entrusted to the care of a gentleman bound for New England, via the French islands, Josephine says :

"I shall be happy if it reach you, with the assurance that your daughter and grandchildren are well. You are doubtless already aware of my misfortunes : that I have now been four months a widow, and left with only my children to console me, and my dear mamma as my sole support. . . . My dearest wish is some day to be reunited to you, and I live only in the hope that this desire may be realized. Adieu, my dear mamma ; we all embrace you, and not a day passes that we do not speak of you, and of our hope of seeing you in good time. Again, farewell. From your daughter, who loves you with all her heart."

"LA-PAGERIE, *veuve* BEAUHARNAIS."

"Do not forget loving remembrances to all our relatives and friends and a greeting to all the servants."

Ever the same, loving and thoughtful, remembering even the negroes on the estate, Josephine forgot nobody, even when herself in deep distress. . . . In apprising her mother of her frightful experiences, she could not but have represented to her the destitute condition in which she and her children had been left : their property had been confiscated, their friends imprisoned. During the year 1792, the general had been obliged to absent himself with the army, and his scant pay, always irregular and sometimes withheld, was the sole support of his family. By the imprisonment of the heads of the household, every resource, of whatever kind, was entirely cut off. It was in pitiable poverty that freedom found the widow of Beauharnais ; but poverty was at that time universal, and to be poor was considered no disgrace. To such depths were the *noblesse* descended, that among them friends shared with each other their last franc, their last crust of bread. It cannot be denied that the vicomtesse was reduced to the last extremities of poverty, that starvation seemed imminent, and that she hardly knew which way to turn for relief. In her extremity, what more natural than that she should appeal to her mother, still residing upon the home estate, to which she was sole heir, after her mother's demise ?

We find this appeal in a letter bearing date 1st of January, 1795.

"My Dearest Mother :—At last, through the kindness of our good friend, Emmery, I have op-

portunity for communicating with you, and I embrace it eagerly. I hope this message from your poor Yeyette and her children will reach you ; for she has great need of your sympathy ; her heart yearns for that of which she has been so long deprived. . . . You must be aware by this time, of the misfortunes that have befallen me, and must know that I have no other recourse than to you for the means of my existence. . . . I am not only widowed, but am deprived of my husband's property ; and without the assistance of our good friends, Emmery and his partner (bankers, or brokers, to whom the La-Pagerie sugars had been remitted and upon which they advanced), I do not know how I should have maintained myself alive. . . . I know too well your regard for my honor to have the least doubt that you will supply me with the means for subsistence and to requite my indebtedness to them. . . . I shall have to depend upon your bounty entirely, and must beg that you make me a remittance at least every three or four months. . . . The children are well ; they love you and send you their tenderest greetings, in which I join. We are looking forward to the time when we shall be once more reunited, never more to be separated ; and this is the dearest wish of your poor Yeyette. Farewell, I again embrace you, with all my heart and soul.

"La-Pagerie, *veuve* Beauharnais."

The mother was able to remit but small sums, and at long intervals, and Josephine's position, depend-

ent as she was upon them, became from day to day more precarious. Through their assistance, however, she was enabled to live during the "starvation time" of 1795; though, in common with many others of her class, she was at times at loss to procure a morsel of daily bread.

Finally, acting upon the advice of the friends at Dunkirk, to which port the Martinique sugars were shipped, she resolved to make a flying visit to Hamburg, where was established the banking-house through which her remittances were received. She arrived there towards the last of October, and was cordially received by the banker, M. Mathiessen, through whose advice she was enabled to effect three bills of exchange on Martinique, as appears from a letter to her mother, dated 30th October, 1795, from Hamburg.

"You will receive, then, my dear mamma, three bills of exchange, drawn upon you from Hamburg, the 25th October, at three-months' sight, in my favor, in three sums, as follows: 400, 350, and 250 pounds sterling. . . . I need not remind you how necessary it is to honor these drafts, since they are for the reimbursement of the friends who have so generously assisted me and my children. . . .

"Why do you hesitate to rejoin us, my dear mamma? Think how much trouble and vexation your coming would save your dear Yeyette, who lives only in the expectation of soon seeing you, and of realizing the hopes she has so long and so ardently cherished. It is also the advice of our friends: to

convert everything possible into funds, and come to us as soon as agreeable, to rejoin your own children, who love you and will ever cherish you. Receive this assurance of tenderest regard, my good and well-beloved mamma.

"LA-PAGERIE, *veuve* BEAUHARNAIS.

"My father-in-law and aunts are well. Give my tenderest regards to all my friends; remembrance to the domestics; embrace my old nurse for me."

These letters show conclusively that, however reduced the widow of the Vicomte Beauharnais may have become, she did not appeal to strangers to assist her, nor to charity. It was to her commercial agents at Dunkirk, where the sugar of the Martinique plantation were shipped for sale; and to her banker at Hamburg, through whom the financial transactions were conducted, that this courageous mother and sagacious woman had recourse. It is possible that she may have received assistance from others, but there is no authentic record of it. These letters, speaking eloquently through the forgotten years of the century past, dispel the cobwebs of fancy and invention, of envy and hate, which have been woven about the memory and deeds of this daughter of the La-Pageries. In order to explain her continued existence during the terrible period of distress subsequent to her marriage with Napoleon, her detractors have assailed her virtue and her integrity, when, as we have seen, neither did she

barter the one, nor depart from the other. She could not have been other than she was; we are not warranted in assuming, and we have no reason for believing, that she was faithless to her character, as we have seen it developed under adversity and sorrow, faithless to her children, nor faithless to the memory of her husband. She bore herself serenely, faithful to her charge, loyal to her friends, unremitting in her efforts to heal the wounds and conceal the scars of the days of the Terror.

CHAPTER XV.

MADAME TALLIEN AND THE DIRECTORY.

"THE Terror ended, a season of luxury succeeds the reign of poverty. Tallien's mistress, now wife,* establishes her *salon*, and gives brilliant soirées. . . . Round her is gathered a new Republican army of *citoyennes* in sandals; *ci-devants*, or other; what remnants soever of the old grace survives are gathered there. . . . At her right hand in this cause labors fair Josephine, the Widow Beauharnais, though in straitened circumstances; intent, both of them, to blandish down the grimness of Republican austerity, and re-civilize mankind. . . . Grim generals of the Republic are there . . . among which do we not recognize once more that little, bronze-complexioned artillery officer of Toulon, home from the Italian wars? . . Somewhat forlorn, for the present, stands that artillery officer; looks with those deep, earnest eyes of his into a future as waste as the most. He stands there, without work or outlook, in this forsaken manner; glances, nevertheless, it would seem, at the kind glance of Josephine Beauharnais; and for the rest, with severe countenance, with open eyes and closed lips, waits what will betide."

* Jeanne Marie Ignace Therese Cabarrus, born in Saragossa, Spain, 1775; Divorced from Tallien, 1802; married the Prince of Chimay. Died in Belgium, Jan. 15, 1835.

In order to understand the current of events that had borne Josephine from prison into the society of the ruling parties, we must retrace our steps, and gather up the threads that wove this rope of circumstance. A fellow-prisoner with the Widow Beauharnais and her companion suspects was the beautiful Madame de Fontenoy, the daughter of Count Cabarrus, Spanish minister of finance, who, at an early age, had been married to M. de Fontenoy, a councillor to the parliament of Bordeaux. She was unhappy with her husband, and secured a divorce shortly before meeting with Tallien, who, in 1793, had been sent on a mission by the Convention to Bordeaux. "In Bordeaux rules Tallien, bristly, fox-haired Tallien, still young in years, now become most gloomy, potent; Pluto on earth, and has the keys of Tartarus." This in allusion to his crimes as agent of the revolutionary committee. . . . But there he met Mme. de Fontenoy, "brown, beautiful woman, daughter of Cabarrus; . . . who became his mistress, whom he would wed." She was born in Saragossa, Spain, about 1775, and was thus some twelve years the junior of Josephine. Her beauty was such as to cause a decided sensation in Paris, and her fame filled the ears of all. But she did not escape arrest, even though the powerful Tallien had fallen in love with her, and she was incarcerated with the other suspects of the Revolution. It was her imprisonment, and the imminent danger of her execution, that led Tallien to make his desperate onslaught upon Robespierre; and thus she was in-

directly the cause of the release, not only of Josephine, but of many others. She was not only handsome, but generous, kind and amiable; and one of the ladies whom she had been the means of saving from death said of her: "If you call Mme. Bonaparte our Lady of Victory, you must call Mme. Tallien our Lady of Good Help."

She was the acknowledged queen of fashion, after the establishment of the Directory, and "set the pace" for the ladies of her small court; though all may not have followed in it. In truth, her "revolutionary reputation" was urged against her appearance at the court of Napoleon, when, by that strange turn of Fortune's wheel, Josephine was the first lady in France. The latter never forgot her indebtedness, however, to Mme. Tallien, and would have bestowed honors upon her, but for the interdict of her royal master. Although Tallien had dared death for love of her, yet the possession of this beautiful woman did not fully realize his hopes. After a few years of married life, during which she bore him several children, they were divorced, in 1802. She was wont to appear at the Tuileries in a Greek costume, clinging and semi-transparent, which displayed more of her transcendent charms than was agreeable to her husband's wishes.*

* Tallien, Jean L., born in Paris 1767; died Nov., 1820.

In 1791 became a member of the Jacobin Club; '92, clerk of the Commune; '93, sent on mission to Bordeaux; '94 denounced Robespierre; '95 assisted in the establishment of the Directory; '98, accompanied Bonaparte to Egypt, as one of the "scientific men;" taken by the English on the return voyage; 1802, divorced from

But for the lives of those dependent upon her, but for their welfare, it would seem that Josephine would rather have accepted death itself, than endure the humiliation of relief from such a source as the revolutionary monster, Tallien. Yet that was but one of the factors in the leveling process by which the *noblesse* were humbled to the earth; made to consort with the very agents of their misery, the blood of their own relations still red on their hands. Tallien was a type of Jacobinism; of the proletariat, now risen to the surface. The son of the house steward of the Marquis of Bercy, he rose by his own talents to a position of influence in the commune, becoming its clerk in 1792, and deputy to the Convention from the department of Seine et Oise. He took his seat among the *Montagnards*, voted for the death of Louis XVI., and was one of the bitterest of the members of the Jacobin Club. In 1793 he was sent to Bordeaux as an emissary of the revolutionary party, where he committed great atrocities. In 1795, as commissioner of the Convention, he ordered all the Royalist prisoners taken by General Hoche to be shot. He was cruel, remorseless, unsparing, pitiless. After the fall of Robespierre he was for a time the acknowledged leader of the "Thermidoreans," and through his influence the infamous Fouquier-Tinville and his accomplices were doomed to the guillotine. His courage was undoubted, and he was among the ablest defenders

Mme. Tallien, by whom he had four children; 1805, appointed consul to Alicante.

of the Convention against the rebellious sections of Paris, and shared in the Republican *coup d'etat* of the "Eighteenth Fructidor." His influence was strongest in the interim between the overthrow of the revolutionary tribunal and the establishment of the Directory, when he was elected a member of the "Council of Five Hundred."

At length the Directory was established, upon the ruins of what remained after three years of anarchy and misrule. The revolution had destroyed itself; the most culpable of the blood-stained conspirators had fallen by their own hands, their heads dissevered by their own instrument of decapitation. Some remained for years unpunished, their many crimes unavenged; they themselves took the lead in the formation of a stable government or an attempt at such. The thousands who had perished made no protest, except through those once bound to them by ties of blood, safe, though impotent, beyond the frontiers of France. Those remaining dared not raise their voice; they must accept the terms their masters should see fit to dictate. It was enough, for the present, that the more moderate had returned to power, or were striving to grasp within their hands the reins of government. From the chaos of anarchy the ark of safety finally appeared, long to be tossed on the tumultuous waves of passion and intrigue; destined never to land on the shore of security; but bearing messengers of peace to a long-suffering people.*

* Carlyle.

In the year 1795, as the result of the earnest efforts of the moderate Republicans, the legislative power was declared vested in two assemblies : the Council of Five Hundred, and the Council of the Ancients ; the former having the exclusive right of proposing laws for the consideration of the latter. The actual power was to be lodged in an Executive Directory of five members, to be chosen by the Council of the Ancients, from a list presented by the Five Hundred. The new "Constitution of the Year III." was acceptable to the people; but even in its birth it came near being strangled by the Convention that was responsible for its existence. Desiring to perpetuate their power and to provide a check for Royalist or ultra-Jacobin return, the authors of the new constitution decreed that two-thirds the new assembly of 500 should be chosen from among themselves ; hence a new uprising ; of which in its place.

Without anticipating the current of events, it may be mentioned that France was ruled by the Directory for four years, during which period it had, altogether, thirteen members, only one, Barras,* officiating during its entire term of official life.

* Barras, P. F. J. N., born 1755 ; 1793 at Toulon ; '94, instrumental in the overthrow of Robespierre; '95, President of Convention; October, calls Bonaparte to his aid to quell insurrection of the sections ; '98, executes the *coup d'etat* which banished the minority, 18th Fructidor;' 99, reigns for a while paramount, until Directory is overthrown by Bonaparte; later, conspired with Royalists, and was banished until after the restoration. Died 1829 ; memoirs published 1873 and 1895.

The supreme power was exercised by five individuals, and of these five Barras stands forth conspicuous. With his name that of Josephine has been associated, to her discredit; her enemies seizing upon the fact of their alleged intimacy to cast the blight of suspicion upon her every act and motive.

Barras was a notable figure before he became associated with the ruling members of the Directory. He had served in the East Indies, with the rank of captain. He took part in the attack upon the Bastille and the Tuileries, and was elected a member of the first Convention. In 1793, he was sent to the south of France, where his severities against the anti-revolutionists, at Toulon, made him prominent as a devoted Republican. He was one of the most active in the revolt of the ninth Thermidor, leading the attack upon the Robespierrians, and commanding the troops who took the arch-enemy prisoner. The day following he was appointed secretary to the Convention; in November a member of the Committee of Safety; an ardent persecutor of the Montagnards, as well as of the Royalists and *emigrés*. In February, 1795, he was elected president of the Convention; chosen as one of the five members of the Directory, he is said to have used his position to gain immense wealth, and to procure the means for gratifying his passion for debauchery.

This was the man with whom, through force of circumstances, Josephine was brought into contact. It is true, that his reputation was bad, perhaps

none was worse, even in that time when the records of personal behavior were not too closely scanned. It is to be feared that less attention was given to the character one at that time bore than to the position he held. It was a period of disruption, of confusion, of *sauve-qui-peut;* any straw would be grasped by the once haughty *noblesse* that gave a promise of extrication from the whelming flood. In the Memoirs of Josephine is a characterization of Barras, which if not from her own pen (as is alleged), at least gives a contemporary delineation of his salient features: "He was the hope of all parties, but espoused none. He severely censured the men of the revolution and cast contempt upon our fierce demagogues. He had just cause of complaint against many of them; yet, for his own advantage, he caressed them all. He wore the livery of no faction. . . . His youth having been boisterous and very irregular, he was despised by the nobility, and this circumstance probably inflamed his zeal in favor of the revolutionary principles. He was a member of the tribunal that sat in judgment on the king. He tendered his resignation; it was not accepted, and the proposition was answered by frightful menaces. The Brutuses of the assembly denounced him as recusant, and fear alone dictated the vote he gave on that dread occasion. . . . Barras became acquainted with Bonaparte when on a mission into one of the southern departments. . . . After the rising against the Convention, Bonaparte had held the post of general of the troops of the division of Paris. Not feeling within himself the

courage to repel force by force, Barras authorized Bonaparte to reap those sterile laurels. . . . This act was enough for those two men, impelled by a thirst for celebrity, and proud of having made the capital tremble. The moderation of the one, and the foresight of the other had made the Frenchmen who were most resolute in opposing the acts of a power as feeble as it was arbitrary, lay down their arms."

Tallien, Barras, Bonaparte : these three names link the history of the widow of Beauharnais with the most eventful period of the French revolution. One after the other descended, retired to the obscurity from which they had emerged, until only one is left : an immortal name, with which that of Josephine is inseparably associated.

By an arbitrary decree of the Convention, which prescribed that two-thirds of the assembly should be taken from its own ranks, offense was given both to Royalists and middle-classes, who, most strangely, united in an uprising against their newly-elected law-makers. By a remarkable reversal of fortune, the Convention found itself opposed by some of its ancient supporters, and allied with it the worst of the proletariats. The greater strength was on the side of the Royalists, who prepared for a conflict to the death ; only prompt and determined action could save the Convention from annihilation.

The president himself was a man of courage and energy, he made the best disposition possible of the troops at his command ; but he hesitated to assume

the responsibility for the carnage that he knew must ensue from a combat at close quarters. His indecision cost him, eventually, his position; cost France millions of soldiers; elevated into prominence a rival who soon hurled him and his companions from power. At Toulon, while on his southern mission, Barras had met Bonaparte, whose skillful strategy had delivered that port from the English into the hands of the French Republicans.

In the summer of 1795 Bonaparte was in Paris, on the verge of poverty, without employment. He had risen to the rank of general of brigade, but had been struck off the list of employed officers, for disobedience of orders. That disobedience, which consisted in a refusal to proceed to the west, to join the army of Hoche, was the cause of his ultimate elevation to the supreme command of the French armies, and placed the crown of France upon his head. For, while the members of the assembly were in a painful state of indecision, an inspiration came to Barras. Turning to his colleagues, he exclaimed: "I have the man we want: he is a little Corsican officer, who will not stand upon ceremony."

Barras was appointed commander-in-chief, and Bonaparte second in command; but upon the latter devolved the duty of repelling the oncoming sections. With what energy he did it; with what skill he posted his troops, defending the salient points of attack; concentrating at exposed positions, mowing down the enraged soldiers of the national guard with his artillery; all this has passed into history.

It was the turning-point of his career, the meeting of the ways at which, arrived, he did not hesitate which road he would take. At his orders, came that "whiff of grape-shot" six years delayed from old Broglie's time; six years too long delayed for the good of royalty—which changed the fortunes of France, of the world. In less than an hour of actual fighting he had saved the Convention, had converted the attack into a retreat, into a rabble rout. . . . This was the formidable uprising of the sections against legally-constituted authority, known as the thirteenth Vendémiaire. After it was over, the strange spectacle was presented of each general in command disclaiming credit for the action. Never before was known such disinterestedness; for neither was anxious to be known as the spiller of Parisian blood. But the responsibility for the event was saddled upon Bonaparte, who in turn sought to accredit it to the Royalists. However, it was done; Paris was saved a revolution, and Barras, in a speech before the Convention, said, with reference to Bonaparte: "It is to his able and prompt dispositions that we are indebted for the defense of this assembly, around which he had posted the troops with so much skill."*

* Bourrienne, "Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte."

CHAPTER XVI.

GENERAL BONAPARTE.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, the defender of the Convention, the hero of the thirteenth Vendémiaire, the victor over the Royalist sections,—who was he? Suddenly he had appeared upon the scene of strife, guiding, controlling; as abruptly, after the deed was done, he had disappeared. But he was not unknown to the Convention, to the members of the Directory, who, even in the turmoil of distracted labors, had kept this young officer of artillery in view. Rather, he had kept himself from being thrust out of sight, had reminded them of his services, had furnished them with a plan for campaigning in Italy, which had commended itself to their best judgment. But who was he, whence had he come?

May we be pardoned if we cite what already the whole world knows: the biography in brief of this remarkable man?

Born at Ajaccio, island of Corsica, August 15th, 1769, Napoleon was six years the junior of Josephine, who was then residing with her parents in the old *sucrerie* of Sannois-la-Pagerie, in Martinique. As we have already noted, both were born in remote provinces of France, in islands held by the force of

arms, and frequently wrested from their possessors, by the varying fortunes of war. The Bonapartes, like the La-Pageries, were of noble birth, coming from Tuscany; but at the time their most illustrious son was born, were in reduced circumstances, living a retired life on a small estate. The father of Napoleon died while the son was a youth, leaving his wife with a large family; the oldest, Joseph, being the nominal head, but Napoleon the actual, from his superior force. In 1779, April 25th, Napoleon was entered at the Royal Military School of Brienne, in France, where he remained five years. In a report of the inspector of the royal military schools, in 1784, is this description of the young student:—

"M. de Bonaparte (Napoleon), born 15th August, 1769, height 4 feet, 10 inches, 10 lines; in the fourth class; has a good constitution, excellent health; character obedient, upright, grateful; conduct, regular; has always been distinguished for his application to mathematics; is passably acquainted with history and geography; not well up in ornamental studies or in Latin, in which he is only in the fourth class. He would make an excellent sailor. He deserves to be passed on to the Military School of Paris."

At the School of Brienne, he was not a favorite with his companion-students, owing to his reserved disposition and his fierce Corsican nature; but he was easily recognized as a leader. He enjoyed the society of his elders more than that of his class-



Bonaparte, First Consul.

mates, one with whom he particularly delighted to converse being the celebrated Abbé Raynal, to whom he later dedicated a History of Corsica, with which his leisure hours had been occupied.

At the age of fifteen he was sent on to the Military College of Paris, in accordance with the recommendation of the inspector, and notwithstanding his deficiency in Latin and the "ornamental branches." Again, he incurred the ill-will of his fellow-students, as well as of the faculty, by addressing a memorial to one of his superiors, upon the extravagance of the beneficiaries of this college. He recommended that instead of being encouraged in leading luxurious lives, with servants at their command, etc., they should be placed under Spartan regulations, with frugal diet, thus to become hardy and temperate, and good examples to their prospective commands. This recommendation was written at the age of sixteen. In October of the same year Napoleon was appointed second lieutenant, in a brigade of artillery, and sent to Valence, where he remained nearly a year. His father had died that year, in the month of February, at the early age of thirty-eight.

The mother, left dependent upon her relatives for support, was ever an object of solicitude to Napoleon, upon whom she relied more than upon the eldest son, Joseph. In 1787, he obtained leave to visit her, remaining absent in Corsica for nearly seven months; returning to France, he obtained

an extension of leave, and again went to his native island, where he stayed till May, 1788.

His third return to Corsica was not, it is to be feared, prompted altogether by filial regard, for we find him engaged in revolutionary movements during a good part of his stay, which lasted from September, 1789, to June, 1791. He overstayed his leave some eight months, an absence which was subsequently excused on his pretext of contrary winds. The next year he was not so fortunate as to have his derelictions overlooked, and he was dismissed from the service, for absence without leave, having returned to Corsica in August, 1791, and left in May, 1792 ; all the time being occupied in revolutionary attempts. In June he might have been seen in Paris, impoverished, living in obscure lodgings, out of favor with the administration, through his own fault, and seeking employment. It was while thus disengaged, a rambler through the streets of Paris, that, one day in June, in company with his friend, his former schoolmate and future secretary, Bourrienne, he encountered the mob on its way to the attack of the Tuileries. "Let us follow the mob," said Bonaparte to his chum ; and, taking their stand in a position commanding the palace, they saw the disgraceful scenes enacted that proved the precursors of the royal downfall. They saw the mob enter the palace, saw the king appear at one of the windows with the red cap on his head. And Bonaparte indignantly exclaimed, his sympathies with

the king: "Why have they let in that rabble? They should have swept off four or five hundred of them with the cannon; the rest would then have set off fast enough."

He was true to this sentiment, as shown in his subsequent defense of the Convention: of the maintaining of the constituted power, as against the rabble, the *canaille* of the capital.

He was in Paris on that fatal tenth of August, when occurred the slaughter of the Swiss guard and the deposition of the king. These events did not seem to affect him so much as his own situation, which was deplorable in the extreme, until, finally, he was reinstated; not only reinstated, but promoted to the grade of captain, and his back-pay granted, dating from the time of his removal.

This was the last of August; in September, he was again in Corsica, to which island he had hurried with succor for his family, and also to participate in another revolutionary attempt. This latter was disastrous, not alone to himself but to his family, for he had declared against Paoli, the hero of Corsica, under whom his father had at one time served as adjutant. A former admirer of the great Corsican, he had turned against him, for reasons which were to him sufficient, but which do not enter into this discussion, except as having a bearing upon his character. As that is not now under review, we will not proceed to details, but merely state that this action of his seems the least

defensible of any since he had arrived at the age of discretion. The Bonapartes, driven from Corsica, landed at Nice, in July, 1793, in a condition bordering upon destitution. Napoleon joined his regiment and proceeded against Marseilles and Toulon. It is at this latter port that the name of Napoleon Bonaparte appears prominently as one of the officers engaged in the investment of that doomed city. He was placed in command of a division of artillery; his genius detected the weak point in the city's defenses; his plan of attack was at once adopted; and as the result the city and port were taken. Toulon had been delivered into the hands of the English, by the royalists and moderates, as a means of protection against the extremists; but through the instrumentality of Bonaparte —at least, mainly through the adoption of his scheme of attack—the English fleet was obliged to leave the harbor. Toulon was left to the mercies of the Republicans, who were determined to make a terrible example of this "nest of traitors." Orders were sent by the Convention to efface Toulon from the earth, together with its inhabitants; and so far as possible these orders were carried into effect. Against these bloody reprisals Napoleon had the courage to protest, but without avail; for he was then only Major of Battalion, promoted 19th October; after the taking of Toulon (December 19th), he was provisionally named General of Brigade.

At Toulon he met Barras and Fréron, whom he was to encounter later in Paris, as influential mem-

bers of the directing powers. They saw him and knew of the great service he rendered their commanding officer; and what is more, they appreciated his services at something like their full value. He was immediately appointed inspector of the coast defenses from the Rhone to the Var, in which service, so congenial to his genius for fortification, he was engaged till the month of April, 1794. He was then for several months with the army of Italy, under General Dumerbion; in July sent on an important mission to Genoa, which he accomplished to the entire satisfaction of his superiors. Yet, in August, he was placed under arrest, the ostensible reason being this very mission, which had resulted to the glory of French diplomacy, and was a gain to its strategic knowledge, inasmuch as Napoleon had closely inspected the fortified posts and defensive points of Genoa and the country adjoining. But such violent changes had taken place at the center of government, that the armies of France, howsoever remote on its frontiers, could not but feel their influence. The events of the ninth Thermidor had transpired. Robespierre was overthrown; the younger Robespierre, with whom Napoleon had co-operated in defense of their country, was arrested, sent to Paris, and guillotined. Bonaparte had been intimate with this younger brother of the great Robespierre, had furnished him with the plans of defense and attack which he had successfully used. The natural inference was that he shared the sentiments also ascribed to the tyrant.

His principles were fairly set forth in a pamphlet he had written July, 1795, called the "*Souper de Beaucaire*," which was such a pronounced declaration of Republican principles that a representative of the Convention had ordered it printed at the public expense.

This had called the attention of the Convention to the rising young officer of artillery in the South, and made him appear as a man whose opinions were advanced and whose principles were strictly in accord with the Republican doctrine.

It was a masterly exposition, and one who was not disposed to favor him, declared, "In these concise judgments is felt the decision of the master and of the man of war."

But, notwithstanding Bonaparte's devotion to the Republican idea, and his declaration of alienation from the Robespierrians, he was arrested and thrown into prison, with orders to be reported before the tribunal at Paris. Had he been sent to Paris, there is little doubt that the guillotine would have disposed of this officer of artillery, whose only crime had been that he had obeyed the orders of his superiors, themselves the victims of the reaction against the terrorists. The terrorist deputies had been superseded by two others, Albitte and Salicetti, the latter a Corsican and supposed friend of Bonaparte. It was through their instrumentality, and conjecturally owing to the enmity of Salicetti, that the young General of twenty-five was arrested, at the outset of his brilliant career. To these deputies, Bonaparte ad-

dressed an indignant demand for release, couched in no uncertain language of defiance, and with a ring of true bravery. He was not conscious of having done aught else than his duty, to his country, to his superior officers ; his integrity was his rock of defense.

"You have suspended me from my duties, put me under arrest, and declared me to be suspected. Thus I am disgraced before being judged, or, indeed, judged before being heard.

"Salicetti, you know me ; and I ask whether you have observed anything in my conduct for the last five years which can afford ground for suspicion? Albitte, you do not know me ; but you have received proof of no fact against me ; you have not heard me, and you know how artfully the tongue of calumny sometimes works. . . .

"Must I then be confounded with the enemies of my country? and ought the patriots inconsiderately to sacrifice a general who has not been useless to the republic? Ought the representatives to reduce the Government to the necessity of being unjust and impolitic? Hear me ; destroy the oppression that overwhelms me, and restore me to the esteem of the patriots. An hour after, if my enemies wish for my life, let them take it. I have often given proofs of how little I value it. Nothing but the thought that I may yet be useful to my country makes me bear the burden of existence with courage."

This was not mere bravado, for Napoleon never shrank from an encounter with the enemy ; he was

ever in the fore-front of battle. This sharp arraignment secured him his release and reinstatement.

From the middle of September, 1794, to the end of March, 1795, he was actively engaged superintending the preparation of an expedition for the recovery of Corsica from the English. This expedition most disastrously failed of accomplishing its object, though through no fault of Bonaparte's, and he was ordered to leave the south of France and report at Paris, for transfer to the army of the Vendée, in command of its artillery. He arrived in Paris in May, and in June was ordered to join the army of General Hoche, at Brest ; but disregarded the order, and in August was attached to the Committee of Public Safety, in an advisory capacity. About mid-September he was taken from the list of employed generals, owing to his disobedience of orders to proceed to the post assigned him. This did not dismay him, for the Committee of Public Safety had approved his plan of the Italian campaign, and he was known as one of the most serviceable generals in the armies of the Republic.

He had made application for and received a large sum for mileage, on his journey from Nice to Paris, and was not in such desperate circumstances as before. A portion of this sum he had transmitted to his mother, at Marseilles, where she was living with her daughters in a condition far removed from affluence. His own prospect and his schemes cannot be better shown than by quoting freely from the letters he wrote his brother Joseph, then resid-

ing at Genoa. . . . The first of these epistles bearing upon this period of Bonaparte's life, is dated :

"Paris, 23d May, 1795. . . . I was yesterday at the estate of Rogny. . . . If you wish to make a good bargain it will be well for you to buy it. Some 8,000,000 assignats will purchase it . . . say 60,000 francs from your wife's dowry. This is my desire and my advice. . . . Regards to your wife, to Desirée, and all the family. . . ."

This plan was not consummated, owing to a repeal of the law by which such properties could be obtained.

"June 25th. . . . I promptly attended to your wife's commission. . . . Desirée asks me for my portrait. I will have it taken. You can give it to her if she still desires it ; otherwise keep it for yourself."

"July 7th. . . . I have received no news from you since you left. Is Genoa, then, the Lethe that divides us? Because I have not heard from Desirée since she arrived at that city."

"July 25th. . . . I have been appointed a general in the Army of the West. My illness keeps me here. I believe you have expressed a desire that I should not speak to Desirée. . . . I have sent you letters from Fréron and Barras, which will recommend you to the charge d'affaires of the republic."

"July 30th. . . . The plan I have proposed will surely be adopted. If I go to Nice, I will see you and Desirée also. I will place Lucian before I leave. It is probable that you will receive a position as consul in Italy. . . ."

"August 1. . . . Peace is made with Spain. . . . My plan for the offensive is adopted. . . . You never speak of Eugénie. . . . My compliments to Julie and also to the silent one (*la Silencieuse*)." Eugénie Desirée Clary, Joseph's sister-in-law, and then the object of Napoleon's thoughts.

"August 12th. . . . Fesch seems to wish to return to Corsica. . . . It is all the same to him. . . . I am little attached to this life. I am constantly surprising myself in the condition of a man on the eve of battle, with a settled conviction that since death is in the end so inevitable, it is folly to be uneasy. All this leads me to brave death and destiny; and if this continues, my friend, in the end I shall no longer turn when a carriage passes. . . . My reason is sometimes astonished at all this; but nevertheless this is the effect produced on me by the moral degradation of this land."

"August 20th. . . . I am at present attached to the Topographical Bureau of the Committee, for the direction of the armies, in the place of Carnot. If I like, I can be sent to Turkey by this government, as General of Artillery, to organize the artillery service of the Grand Seigneur, with a suite and flattering titles." It was the dearest wish of Napoleon's heart, at that moment, to be sent to Turkey for the reorganization of the artillery service of the Turks; he had already sent a memorial to the Committee to this effect; and at last his wishes seemed about to be gratified. At the very time of his dismissal from the service a recommend-

ation was made by a branch of the Committee to send him to Turkey with an extensive retinue. But events forestalled this, as his letters show. . . . "I fear that they do not wish me to go to Turkey. We shall see. Write me always on the supposition that I am going."

"August 25th. . . . I still hope for a consulship for you in Naples. . . . I am overwhelmed with business. . . ."

"September 5th. . . . The Committee think it will be impossible for me to leave (for Turkey) while the war lasts. I am to be reinstated in the artillery, and probably will continue with the Committee. . . . If I remain here it is not impossible that I may commit the folly of marrying. A word to this effect on your part might bring it about. It might perhaps be as well to speak of it to Eugénie's brother; let me know the result, and all is said that need be."

"September 6th. . . . Do not fear for me; my friends are all good men, of whatever party. Tell me what you would have me do for you. Try to so arrange affairs that my absence will not matter. You know, my friend, that I live only in the pleasure I can give my own. If my hopes are seconded by my usual good-fortune, which has never yet abandoned me, I shall make you all happy and fulfill your desires. It is now necessary that this affair of Eugénie's be terminated one way or the other. I shall await your response with impatience."

"September 26th. . . . There are at this moment

some incendiary symptoms, signs of an ebullition ; much heat in the head. It will all be over in a few days ; the moment appears critical ; but the genius of Liberty will never abandon her defenders."

"October 3d. Night of the 13th–14th Vendémiaire" (after the Royalist uprising of the sections). . . . "Two o'clock in the morning. . . . At last, all is over. My first impulse is to write you the news. The Royalists of the sections became each day more confident. The Convention had ordered the disarmament of the Section Lepelletier ; it had repulsed the troops. Menou, who commanded, was, they say, a traitor. . . . The Convention named Barras as Commander-in-Chief of their forces ; they named me second in command. We disposed our troops. The enemy advanced to attack us at the Tuileries. We killed many of them. We ourselves lost thirty killed and some sixty wounded. We have disarmed the sections, and all is tranquil now. My usual luck : did not receive even a scratch. . . . Good fortune is mine.

"My regards to Eugénie and Julie."

In these few words the conqueror of the sections announced to his brother the most important action of his life hitherto. It was the turning-point in his career ; his future was, indeed, assured.

"October 18th. . . . I am now a General of Division ; second in command in the Army of the Interior; Barras Commander-in-Chief. All goes well. Am exceedingly busy, and cannot now write in detail."

"November 9th. . . . In the midst of my many

occupations, which leave me but little time, I snatch a moment to write you a word. Fesch, whom I have already instructed, will advise you of everything of interest. Adieu. Embrace thy wife and Desirée for me."

"November 17th. . . . The family shall want for nothing. I have received 400,000 francs for your assignats. . . . Send me more particulars regarding thy wife and Eugénie. . . . Songis is now my aide-de-camp, chief of brigade ; Junot chief of battalion ; Louis, and five others you do not know, are captains, aides-de-camp."

"December 31st. . . . If you are wearied of Genoa, I do not see but you may come to Paris, where I am established ; table and carriage at your disposal. Ozon leaves day after to-morrow, carrying my presents to thy wife. If you do not wish to be consul, come here and choose what would suit you."

"January 11th, 1796. . . . The multiplicity of my duties and the many important affairs that engage my attention, do not permit me to write you often. I am happy here, and contented. I have sent the family 50—60,000 francs, silver and assignats ; have no uneasiness (on their account). Good wishes to Julie. . . ."

"February 7th, 1796. . . . You are sure to be appointed consul to whatever place you wish. Lucien starts to-morrow for the Army of the North. Fesch is here, in a good position. The family need nothing." *

* These letters are from the "*Correspondance du Roi Joseph*," published in Paris, 1853.

This is the last letter of this important period, so critical in the lives of the Bonapartes. They had crossed the Rubicon; instead of poverty and obscurity, they were now, thanks to the genius and the devotion of the son and brother, to bask in the sun of prosperity.

In these letters, it cannot but be observed, Napoleon makes no mention of his acquaintance with the Vicomtesse de Beauharnais. There was little need, in fact, to announce all his doings to his brother, for the latter did not by any means stand to him in the character of a mentor. Only those things pertaining to their individual affairs, to their family welfare, were referred to. There is, until the end of the year 1795, a constant and tender allusion to Desirée, the lovely sister of Madame Joseph Bonaparte, and with whom Napoleon was undoubtedly at one time somewhat enamored. It has been charged that he had engaged her affections, and that it was understood amongst their acquaintances that they would some time be married. But these letters show that the fault, if there were a fault, was not Bonaparte's. In nearly all there is some message for the "silent one," some reference to an affair which either she did not wish to acknowledge, or Joseph and his wife did not like to encourage. From other letters, of hers, in existence, it would seem that she considered herself the injured one; but it does not so appear in these unstudied effusions of Bonaparte to his brother. But, if he ever held for her anything more than a transient regard, it

was soon effaced by his first real passion, that for the fair widow, Josephine de Beauharnais, whose acquaintance was first formed immediately after the thirteenth Vendémiaire.

CHAPTER XVII.

MARRIAGE OF JOSEPHINE AND NAPOLEON.

THE hour had come in which these two children of destiny were to be united. Though born on islands widely separate : one in Corsica, whose rocks are laved by the waters of the Mediterranean ; the other in Martinique, cradled in the warm waves of the Atlantic ; the fates, propitious or otherwise, had brought them together in the mother-land of France. We have seen what were the circumstances of their earlier lives. We have seen with what care Fortune had trained the woman for a future of high emprise ; had fitted her for companionship with the foremost man of his time. She met Napoleon at the outset of his great career, when the gates were open to success, which he had so long and so vainly stormed. At last, his patience, his persistent waiting, his implicit faith in his destiny, were to be rewarded. No longer poor, obscure, a dweller in mean lodgings, a student in garrets, a pleader for the recognition which he knew was his due ; he was the successful commander in favor with the Convention, promoted for his bravery and rewarded for his genius in defense of principle.

He had triumphed over every obstacle : he had

won victories, not only over the Royalist foes of the Convention, but over his lowlier self. From this time he was changed, not only was there a physical change, a transformation, from the untamed, brusque and skeptical artillery officer of unknown origin ; but there was a change in his moral nature, as well. He abandoned the habits of his impecunious youth ; he slid easily into the position he had won with his sword ; he more than filled it ; he looked ever beyond, for something more than the present afforded. While others were content with the temporary rewards of chance or skill, he still schemed and planned ; his eye fixed upon an ultimate triumph over every obstacle, in his pathway to the throne of France.

Immediate promotion had rewarded him for his daring defense of the governing power, and he was now virtually commander-in-chief of the Army of the Interior. As such he had supervision of all Paris ; he carried out the disarmament and surveillance of the sections, and was occupied with his gigantic plans by night and by day.

Different stories are related of the first meeting of the Vicomtess de Beauharnais and Napoleon Bonaparte. That which has been oftenest told, although in recent times denied, is one that several times received the endorsement of Napoleon himself, when a prisoner on the rock of St. Helena. Soon after the events of the thirteenth Vendémiaire had transpired, and while Napoleon was engaged in the arduous work of reducing the chaos of revolution to a condition of

peace, he was approached by a beautiful boy about fourteen years of age, who supplicated the return of his father's sword. This parent had been a general at one time in the service of the republic and had perished on the scaffold. This youth was Eugène de Beauharnais, since the Viceroy of Italy ; thanks to the favor of the man he was then entreating. Touched by the nature of his demand, and the ingenuous charm of the youth, Napoleon at once gave orders that the sword should be restored to his possession. Upon receiving it Eugène burst into tears ; and even the stern general was visibly affected. A few days later the mother of the youth, the widow of the general whose sword was reclaimed, came to thank Bonaparte in person. Struck with her appearance, Bonaparte soon returned her visit ; a pleasant acquaintance followed, which ripened into intimacy ; and their marriage was not long delayed.*

It was a fortunate meeting for Josephine, at this juncture of her affairs ; which, as we have seen, were not too prosperous.

Having arrived at the grade of General of Division, Napoleon found himself at last in a position to

* In the "Memorials of St. Helena," and in the "Recollections of Dr. O'Meara, we find three different allusions to this event.

The Emperor, recalling, in his captivity, the tenderness that overcame him on seeing the tears of Eugène, said : "I was much moved, and praised and caressed him. Several days after his mother came to pay a visit of thanks. I was impressed by her charm of form and still more by her *esprit*. This first impression deepened each day we met ; and our marriage was not slow in following."

marry, and it seems not to have been his fault that he did not espouse Mlle. Eugénie-Desirée Clary, his brother Joseph's sister-in-law. There is little doubt of an affection previously existing between them, as shown by the letters of both ; as evidenced in Bonaparte's own letters, which we have quoted, to his brother Joseph. But Eugénie's father, a rich merchant of Marseilles, was opposed to the marriage of his daughter with a poor unknown officer of the artillery. Perhaps he thought one poor Corsican in the family was sufficient, for Joseph was by no means a great success, either as a man of business or later, as the occupant of a throne. So he and his family set themselves against it, with the result that the young people were obliged to submit to their mandate. That Eugénie for a long time cherished the image of Napoleon in her heart is attested by her own writings ; that Bonaparte also felt an injustice had been done this sweet and attractive girl, is incidentally shown by his subsequent favors to the one she finally married : Bernadotte, who often incurred Napoleon's censure ; but was steadily promoted ; until finally raised to the throne of Sweden. This affair with Eugénie Clary, which might easily have been crowned by marriage, was probably the only instance in which the affections of the great general were seriously engaged, previous to his meeting with Josephine.

As a youth and in early manhood, he may have indulged in trivial flirtations ; in truth, for so serious a nature, he was quite susceptible to the charms

of the other sex. But, from a French standpoint, he was comparatively virtuous ; his love of study kept him true to his chosen mistress, the Goddess of Science ; his poverty was a barrier between him and temptation.

He mingled freely in the society of the Directorial *salons*, meeting there many who were of service to him in many ways ; gleaning from the men and women of all parties useful information. He went for recreation, also, for there was a social side to the young General, which his busy life in camp and barrack had not permitted him time to develop. Under the glances of the fair Parisiennes he thawed out sufficiently to be polite, though none of them could penetrate his habitual reserve. Perhaps the Vicomtesse de Beauharnais, who was always so approachable and so gracious, won him to her side unconsciously. She, with the beautiful Madame Tallien, are said to have ruled in the social world, at that time. Strange stories have been related of these two, since, conspicuous in the small world of society, they were also prominent targets for the malice and envy of their associates. It was a strange and cruel fate that condemned such as Josephine, allied by birth and marriage with the *noblesse*, not only to associate with the murderers of her husband and her friends, but to adorn their triumphs. In doing so, she merely accepted the inevitable ; the old *régime* was dead ; the new was inchoate ; society was yet seething and bubbling in its witch's caldron. There were curious juxtapo-

sitions, unaccountable alliances. "One is little inclined to dwell upon the ruling society of this period. It had neither the dignity of past tradition, nor freedom of intellectual expression." Woman was as yet hardly a factor in the calculations of the ruling class of men. She had escaped with what of life and virtue their magnanimity allowed her; she was still somewhat the sport of circumstance. It is small wonder, then, that she was evil-spoken of; that she was lightly accused of being wanton; as lightly regarded the accusation.

With Bonaparte's accession to power the feelings of the Clary family in respect to a prospective marriage with their daughter, may have changed; but the sentiments of the future conqueror of Italy and Austria had also undergone a change.

The name of Desirée was no longer mentioned by him; since the middle of November, in fact, he was occupied with another; his heart was possessed by the woman he had met soon after the events of October: he had seen Josephine! . . .

We have seen, from his letters of this period to his brother, what was his condition, his ambition, previous to and after the thirteenth Véndemiaire; that page of his history was written by the same hand that wielded the sword of Arcole and Rivoli. His meeting with Madame de Beauharnais was about the last of October or the first of November, when she first made her appearance in society.

If one might believe certain letters ascribed to this epoch, but which are without doubt apocryphal,

the widow of Beauharnais had figured prominently in some of the fêtes and reunions which followed the overthrow of the Revolution and were the diversion and scandal of Paris. But as a matter of fact, we fail to find her name mentioned in contemporaneous annals previous to the opening of the year 1796, and we cannot but ascribe to malevolent motives the oft-repeated statement that a woman of her heart, her sensibilities, and above all, her love of the *convenances*, took part in the festivities that followed so soon after the cruel death of her husband. There is no probability whatever that Josephine was at all prominent in society before her meeting with Napoleon ; it would have been impossible, with the eyes of her children and her husband's family upon her, to have disregarded their wishes or the dictates of her own sensitive nature. With the exception of the time necessary for the transaction of her business affairs, as at Hamburg, her life was quietly passed in a restricted social circle composed of the few friends the Revolution had left to her, and those whose acquaintance she had formed in prison.

Of this number were her aunts, Madame d'Aiguillon, Madame Récamier, Madame Chateau-Renard, and Madame Tallien. To the latter, as her savior from the horrors of prison, Josephine ever felt deeply attached, and, unlike many who had been recipients of her favor, always displayed towards her sentiments of the liveliest friendship and gratitude. For Josephine had, as she has herself said,

a horror of ingratitude ; she would not dissimulate, even though her friend was proscribed by the Royalist leaders of society, and the wife of one of the leaders of the revolutionary reaction. As such, however, Madame Tallien interested her husband in her friend, and secured through him the restitution of some of her property.*

At the house of Madame Tallien, doubtless, the Vicomtesse met the representative Barras, whom the Ninth Thermidor had also placed in the forefront with Tallien and his coadjutors. Respecting the relations presumed to have existed at one time between Barras and the subject of this history, there has not been adduced any evidence that a reputable historian would admit to his pages. What has been asserted has been devoid of proof, and upon the mere word of an envious and disappointed man. Aside from the fact that Mme. de Beauharnais was not indebted to Barras for the restitution of her property, nor for the appointment (as has been alleged) of her future husband to the Italian com-

* "On l'appelait 'Notre Dame de Thermidor,' car elle rendait service aux malheureux de tous les partis. Cela n'empêcha pas les royalistes, par une injure gratuite et une ingratitude atroce, de la nommer 'Notre-Dame de Septembre,' faisant allusion aux massacres des 2 et 3 Septembre, 1792, pendent lesquels Tallien était secretaire de la Commune de Paris. Mme. Tallien était recherchée et courtisée à la fois pour elle-même et pour l'influence de son mari dans les affaires ; elle était l'ornement de toutes les fêtes et l'âme de tous les plaisirs. Elle régnait sans avoir les embarras du trône ; son empire sécha bien des larmes, et n'en coûta, que je sache, à personne."—"Thibaudeau, Mémoires sur la Convention et la Directoire."

mand ; she certainly had too great regard for her children, and for the family with which she was allied, to seriously compromise herself with a man like Barras. Neither was the one who aspired at that time to her hand, no matter how blind the love he felt had rendered him, likely to regard without suspicion any act that would indicate undue intimacy between the one he loved and his superior. Whatever may have been charged to Napoleon, it has not been shown that he lacked in sensibility, nor appreciation of honorable motive. He had, besides, that confidence in himself, that conviction of his own high destiny, which forbade the acceptance of a favor, or of assistance with the suspicion of indebtedness.

It was about this time that Josephine left the house she had occupied in the Rue de l'Université, to reside in another which she had bought of Talma, the famous actor. She had now arrived at a better fortune ; in addition to what she had brought back from Hamburg she now received more regular remittances from her mother, and, thanks to the favor of Tallien, was in the enjoyment of the restituted properties. She was able to assume a certain state in the conduct of her household and the dispensing of her hospitality. Her reunions gathered together many of the friends of former times, who had been dispersed by the Revolution ; here the young General found himself in the midst of the most agreeable company of Paris, and it was not long before he came to pass nearly all his evenings under the

hospitable roof of her little house in the Rue Chantereine.

He was welcome, yet he was shunned by some and feared ; but it mattered not to him, so the kind hostess had a smile for him. With his ardent nature love made rapid progress ; he soon declared himself. It is not true that his heart was possessed solely by ambition to the exclusion of love ; he was assailed by the most violent passion that ever vexed the heart of man. His letters attest to the depth and sincerity of the passion that had seized him, absorbing, profound, idealizing the object of its desires.

In sooth, from the first moment that Bonaparte had beheld the Vicomtesse de Beauharnais he was fascinated—that is the word—by that sovereign charm of manner, that mingled grace and dignity, which attracted to her all with whom she came in contact.

Says Madame de Rémusat, in her *Mémoires:* "Bonaparte was young when he first met Mme. de Beauharnais, who was greatly superior to the rest of the circle in which she moved, both by reason of the name she bore, and the elegance of her manners. She attached herself to him and flattered his pride ; she procured him a step forward in rank (?) ; he became accustomed to associate the idea of her influence with every piece of good fortune that befell him ; and this superstition, which she kept up very cleverly, exerted great power over him, for a long time. . . . When he married the Widow Beauharnais, Bonaparte believed

that he was allying himself to a very great lady; his marriage, therefore, was one conquest the more. . . . Yet he had some affection for her, and if he was ever really stirred by any emotion, it was by her and for her."

This is the admission of a woman who was the recipient of favors from both Josephine and Bonaparte, one who played an important though subordinate part in their imperial court, and whose envy was excited by the success of those she would rather have regarded as her inferiors in station. There is little doubt that at first the General was drawn to the Vicomtesse by her social position, the importance of which he may have exaggerated; though she was allied with two of the most honorable families of France, was the widow of one of the most respected generals of the republic, who had also held the office of president of the Assembly at a most critical period of its fortunes, and who had been a welcome guest in the *salons* of the old régime. Josephine was undoubtedly what would then have been considered a *bon parti*, for the recently-elevated general of the Army of the Interior, who, having risen to his present position by his unaided sword, and dependent upon it for his future greatness, might perish in the war without attaining to any higher rank than that he then held. On the other hand, it could not have been from interest, merely, that Bonaparte sought the hand of the Vicomtesse in marriage, for he neither knew nor cared what was her fortune.

A widow of only eighteen months, Josephine had not lost all recollection of her husband's many amiable qualities ; of the promise the future seemed to hold respecting their closer union ; of the anguish and the affectionate solicitude of those last moments of his life, when, with his latest breath, he had commended their children to her care. The prospect of another assuming his place in her affections and becoming a second father to his children, was at the outset repugnant to her. Bonaparte promised to love and protect her children as his own ; and this promise no one can accuse him of having forgotten ; he ever held their interests as his own, always manifested for them the tenderest regard, the most earnest solicitude.

Her family counseled her to accept the General's proposal : her aunt, Mme. de Renaudin, Fanny Beauharnais, and even the old Marquis, her father-in-law. If reasons for her acceptance were wanting, they were not long forthcoming. This contest between her regard for Alexander's memory and his children, on the one side ; and a sincere love, ardently expressed, on the other, tore her heart with doubts.

A letter attributed to Josephine, and assigned to this period of her history has been published, assuming to throw light upon her feelings and motives at this time. But this letter bears every evidence of being a fabrication, it is so altogether different from the chaste style in which Josephine was wont to express herself, treats with such levity

the memory of her husband and the serious attentions of one who would honor her with his hand . . .

"My dear friend, I am urged to marry again; my friends counsel the measure, my aunt almost lays her injunctions to the same effect, and my children entreat my compliance. Why are you not here to give me your advice at this important juncture: to persuade me that I ought to consent to a union which must put an end to the irksomeness of my present position? . . . You have met General Bonaparte at my house. Well, it is he who would supply a father's place to the orphans of Alexandre de Beauharnais, and a husband's to his widow . . . 'Do you love him?' you will ask. Not exactly. 'You then dislike him?' Not quite so bad; but I find myself in that state of indifference which is anything but agreeable, and which to devotees in religion gives more trouble than all their other peccadilloes. Love, being a kind of worship, requires that one feel very differently from all this; and hence the need I have for your advice, which might fix the irresolution of my feeble character. . . .

"Being now past the heyday of youth, can I hope long to preserve that ardor of attachment which, in the General, resembles a fit of delirium? If, after our union, he should cease to love me, will he not reproach me with what he will have sacrificed for my sake? Will he not regret a more brilliant marriage which he might have contracted? What shall I then reply? What shall I do? I shall weep. . . .

"Excellent resource, you will say. . . . Barras gives assurance that if I marry the General he will so contrive that he shall be appointed to the command of the Army of Italy. Yesterday, Bonaparte, speaking of this favor, which already excites murmuring among his fellow-soldiers, said to me: 'Think they, then, I have need of their protection? Egregious mistake. They will all be but too happy, one day, should I condescend to grant them mine. My sword is by my side, and with it I will go far.'"

In this strain this conjectural letter from the pen of the Vicomtesse continues, bearing on its face the evidence of its falsity.* Josephine has been peculiarly unfortunate in her female biographers, writers of memoirs that depend upon the interest attaching to their illustrious subject for their favor with the public.

Not less mendacious, apparently, are the alleged memoirs of Mlle. le Normand, attributed to Josephine herself. From the fabric of fiction it is difficult to extract what may be accepted as true; but there is, doubtless, somewhat of truth in the body of the book; though the animus of the author is apparent: to strike, through her heroine, her imperial consort.† Thus, credence is given to the statement that Bonaparte was indebted to Barras for his promotion; and the inference is given that it was as

* "Mémoires de Mme. Ducrest."

† "Memoires Historique et Secret de l' Impératrice Joséphine;" par Mlle. M. A. le Normand: Paris, 1818.

the reward for favors already received from Josephine. Under the guise of friendship, the women strike at the hand once stretched forth to their assistance; while ostensibly writing these truthful memoirs of Josephine, they poison the minds of their readers with their base suggestions of intrigue.

In the Le-Normand memoirs Josephine is made to say: . . . "I now come to the time when my destiny was to change. Since the death of my husband, my heart had dwelt upon those dreadful events which had decimated France and plunged so many families into mourning and oblivion. . . . The image of my lost happiness revealing itself to me as I reflected that M. de Beauharnais had intended again to unite himself to me, seemed, even in the midst of my misfortunes, to betoken a happier future.

"Happy to be free, I felt a repugnance to contracting another marriage. . . . But, being one day on a visit at Mme. Chateau-Renard's I was sitting at a window looking at some violets, when suddenly the famous Bonaparte was announced. Why, I was unable to tell, but that name made me tremble; a violent shudder seized me on seeing him approach. I dared, however, to catch the attention of the man who had achieved so easy a victory over the Parisians. . . . The rest of the company looked at him in silence. I was the first to speak to him. The next day Barras said to me: 'I am about to propose to you, madame, something to your advantage. For a long time you have thought only of the

welfare of others ; it is high time you should be occupied about your own affairs. I want to make you marry the little Bonaparte, whom I have just got appointed general-in-chief, and to whom I have given the business of conquering Italy.' . . .

"I was surprised at the proposal ; it by no means met my approbation. 'Do you really think of that?' said I to the Director ; 'your project is inconceivable.' . . . We met several times at Tallien's ; the more I sought to avoid his presence, the more he seemed to multiply himself in my way. . . . But I consented, at length, to marry the hero who was to conquer so many nations. . . . I myself sent to Bonaparte the letter of the Directory, offering him the command of the Army of Italy. . . . He had but a few days to make his preparations for crossing the Alps ; and two days before his departure he received the title of my husband. . . . Bonaparte left me an honorable title, and a delightful abode at his residence, where I saw constantly the best of company, where I was visited by deputies and generals."

These memoires were published four years after the death of Josephine and while Napoleon was a prisoner at St. Helena ; his enemies were in power again ; this book was intended as a propitiatory offering to royalty, by an unprincipled and unscrupulous woman, Mlle. Le-Normand, who was a professional fortune-teller of Paris.

We turn with relief to the authentic narrative of

Josephine's life which has been taken as the basis of this history, published some forty years after her death, and written by one who made a careful examination of all available material, in France and in the island of her birth.*

Josephine was impressed by the ardor of her lover's suit, by his ingenuous affection; but she doubted her ability, being no longer in her *première jeunesse*, to hold in thrall the genius of one so aspiring, and at the same time so much younger than herself. Her first marriage had been at the outset so unhappy, she feared to engage in another contract that should fetter the freedom she then enjoyed, and which, though it exposed her to malicious attacks, yet had its manifold attractions. But in the end, she submitted, drawn in spite of herself by the magnetic, dominant personality of the young and ardent Napoleon. Once having yielded her consent, she could not but recall, and impart to her affianced, the prediction of the Martinique prophetess, which seemed to confirm her impression that she was indeed to link her fortunes with the man of destiny. Not all her friends believed that her prospective union was to be a betterment of her fortunes; many, in fact, averring that the advantage lay with the General of the Convention.

Having accepted the General's offer, Madame de Beauharnais charged her friend, Mme. Campan, with the disagreeable duty of breaking the news to

* "Histoire de l' Impératrice Joséphine," par Joseph Aubenas: Paris, 1857.



Eugénie Désirée Clary.

her children ; for she shrank from acquainting them with the approaching marriage, knowing full well their reverence for their father's memory and name. Eugène was then at college, and Hortense was at the famous school kept by Madame Campan, which she had entered in August or September, 1795.*

The union was consummated, after the manner of those revolutionary times, by an appearance before a civil magistrate, on the 9th of March, 1796, in the mayoralty of the second arrondissement of Paris, in which Mme. de Beauharnais then resided.

Their brief honeymoon was passed in the little house, Rue Chantereine. Twelve days later, Bonaparte was compelled to leave his bride, his new-found happiness, the home to which he had at last attained, and on the 21st of March was on his way to win the imperishable glory which awaited him on the battle-fields of Italy.

* "*Correspondance de Mme. Campan avec la Reine Hortense*" . . . "Six mois après (l'entrée d'Hortense à Saint-Germain), Mme. de Beauharnais vint me faire part de son mariage avec un gentilhomme Corse, élève de l'école militaire et général. Je fus chargée d'apprendre cette nouvelle à sa fille, qui s'affligea longtemps de voir sa mère changer de nom," etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN.

ONE object of Bonaparte's desires had been attained, one ambition gratified, but he had not yet scaled the heights of fame. In the marriage-act Napoleon is indicated as General-in-Chief of the Army of the Interior, although he had been nominated to the command of the Army of Italy two weeks before, or on the 22d of February. His commission may not have been signed, or he may not have chosen to assume the title in advance of taking the command. His friends would ascribe such an act to modesty, his enemies to policy; but whatever the reason, such is the fact. As witnesses to the marriage there were, on the part of Napoleon, the representative Barras, as member of the Directory and chief of the Vendémiaire, and Lemarrois, Bonaparte's aide-de-camp. Several officers served him in this capacity, at that time; but he had given the preference to Lemarrois, because, it is thought, he had been indirectly instrumental in promoting this marriage, by introducing to the General the young Eugène, on the occasion of his request for his father's sword. Mme. de Beauharnais had, as witnesses, Tallien, to whom and whose wife she was so deeply

indebted ; and a certain lawyer, Calmelet, an old friend and solicitor of the Beauharnais.

The names of the contracting parties were recorded as " Napolione Bonaparte, and Marie-Joseph-Rose de Tascher." The residence of the General is given as Rue d'Anton, which was then, doubtless, his private domicile ; though as military commandant his official residence was in the Rue des Capucins.

Josephine's domicile is entered as at Rue Chantereine, in the little house from which, four years later, Bonaparte emerged as the genius of the 18th Brumaire, and the dictator of all France.

One error in the marriage-act cannot be overlooked, although it may be attributed to gallantry on the part of Napoleon, or negligence of the civil officer, as to their respective ages. The age of Bonaparte is entered as twenty-eight, when he was but twenty-six, seven months ; that of Josephine as the same, when she was really thirty-two and more ; in other words, the general was made two years older and his wife four years younger, than their certificates of birth would warrant. Both may have been sensitive as to the discrepancy in their ages, and doubtless both connived at this innocent deception, which was at most a sop to their vanity. This fiction is said to have been perpetuated so late as 1814, in the Imperial Almanac of that date ; but no one was deceived thereby, and eventually the truth was published.

Another irregularity in the " act " was the per-

mitting of the aide-de-camp, Lemarrois, to sign as witness, when he had not arrived at the legal age. Either of these irregularities, it has been declared, would have invalidated the contract, and have made easier for Napoleon the accomplishment of his subsequent plans for divorce, had he been aware of the facts. But, fortunately, nothing untoward occurred to mar their brief day of happiness, before the departure of the groom for his distant fields of glory.

Before dismissing the events of this most important period from these pages, let us recur to that appointment of commander-in-chief, which, it has been alleged, Bonaparte received through the favor in which Josephine had been held by Barras. This has been effectually disproven by reference to the records of the time, and the denial of the one man who was then at the head of military affairs in the Directory. It was to that great military genius of the Directory, the upright, unimpeachable Carnot, and not to Barras, that Bonaparte owed this recognition of his merit. This statement was made by Carnot, during his exile in Switzerland, and is reaffirmed in his memoirs*: . . . "It is not true that Barras proposed Bonaparte for the Italian campaign; it was I, myself. If he had failed, upon my shoulders would have been foisted the responsibility; but he succeeded, and Barras claims the credit. . . ." There was nothing unusual in the appointment: the

* "*Mémoires Historiques et Militaires sur Carnot*": Paris, 1824.

young General was in constant communication with the Directory, after the 13th Vendémiaire ; for six months he was laboring indefatigably to reorganize the Army of the Interior ; his plans for the Italian campaign had been examined and adopted ;—who more likely than he, their author, to succeed in carrying them out ? In truth, who else than he, what genius less than his, could bring about their accomplishment ?

In short, a concensus of contemporary opinion gives a verdict opposed to the claims of Barras as the discoverer of this great military adept and the promoter of his fortunes. He was naturally jealous that one nominally second in command should have risen so far above him : envy and malice supplied the weapons. Josephine became the unconscious instrument for attacking and wounding this giant whom he could not overthrow. Bourrienne, who later became the private secretary of Napoleon, and has written his memoirs, which are in the main reliable, says of the marriage : . . . " One day, at breakfast, Bonaparte called my attention to a young lady who sat opposite to him, and asked what I thought of her. The way in which I answered his question seemed to give him much pleasure. He then talked a great deal to me about her, her family, and her amiable qualities ; he told me that he should probably marry her, as he was convinced that the union would make him happy. I also gathered from his conversation that his marriage with the young widow would probably assist him

in gaining the objects of his ambition. His constantly increasing influence with her had already brought him into contact with the most influential persons of that epoch. . . . He remained in Paris only ten days after his marriage, which took place on the 9th of March, 1796. It was a union in which great harmony prevailed, notwithstanding occasional slight disagreements. Bonaparte never, to my knowledge, caused annoyance to his wife."*

"Madame Bonaparte possessed personal graces and many good qualities. I am convinced that all who were acquainted with her must have felt bound to speak well of her ; to few, indeed, did she ever give cause for complaint. In the time of her great power she did not lose any of her friends, because she forgot none of them. Benevolence was natural to her, but she was not always prudent in its exercise. Hence her protection was often extended to persons who did not deserve it. Her taste for splendor and expense was excessive, and this proneness for luxury became a habit which seemed constantly indulged without any motive. What scenes have I not witnessed when the moment for paying the tradesmen's bills arrived. . . She always kept back from Napoleon one-half their claims, and the discovery of this exposed her to new reproaches. How many tears did she shed which might easily have been spared." . . .

Meneval, Bourrienne's successor as private

* "Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte," by Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne, his Private Secretary.

secretary to Bonaparte, confirms this testimony to the gentleness and grace of Josephine: . . . "She had the soft abandonment, the supple and elegant movements, and the graceful carelessness of the Creoles. Her temper was always the same. She was gentle and kind, affable and indulgent with every one, knowing no difference with persons. She had neither a superior mind, nor much learning; but her exquisite politeness, her full acquaintance with society, with the Court, and with their innocent artifices, made her always know at need the best thing to say or to do." *

The women who have left on record their impressions, either in contemporary letters or in memoirs

* Said the observant Talleyrand, when asked about her: . . . "*Avait-elle de l'esprit?* "*Elle s'en passait supérieurement bien.*" Says Madame de Remusat: "Without being precisely pretty, she possessed many personal charms: her features were delicate, her expression was sweet; her mouth was very small, and concealed her bad teeth; her complexion was rather dark, but with artificial aids she remedied that defect. Her figure was perfect; her limbs flexible and delicate, her movements easy and elegant. La-Fontaine's lines could never have been more fitly applied than to her—'*Et la grâce, plus belle encore que la beauté!* . . . She dressed with perfect taste, enhancing the elegance of whatever she wore. . . . To all her other qualities she added extreme kindness of heart, a remarkably even temper, and great readiness to forget a wrong that had been done her." And Miot de Melito, a partisan of Joseph Bonaparte's, who was not too well disposed towards Josephine: . . . "No woman has united so much kindness to so much of natural grace, or has done more good with more pleasure than she did. She honored me with her friendship, and the remembrance of the benevolence she has shown me, to the last moment of her too short existence, will never be effaced from my heart."

published after their demise, have been less just to one of their own sex—as is most natural—than the men. But even those who were devoured with envy at her high position, who were obliged to accept unwillingly subordinate stations in her court, have testified to her unfailing goodness, sweetness of disposition, and her bounty.

We are not aware of any existing portrait of Josephine, of any bust or drawing, of the period preceding her second marriage, but this portrait-mosaic from the hands of her contemporaries, sufficiently limns her features and her characteristics. Her eyes were deep blue, her hair brown, not over luxuriant, her complexion dark, her mouth small, the lips parted in a smile of exceeding sweetness, the nose with arched and sensitive nostrils, and inclined to retroussé. She was not a beauty, although she had more than fulfilled the promise of her youth, as we have seen her at Martinique, and on her arrival in France. She could not compare in respect to mere personal attractions with Mme. Tallien, nor with Napoleon's sister, Pauline, later a reigning belle; but Josephine completely realized one's ideal of an attractive, fascinating woman, with an air of distinction about her that impressed all who met her, particularly Bonaparte, on his first acquaintance, who had from birth a penchant towards the aristocracy.

Such was Josephine at the period when, the bride of Napoleon, she was left alone in Paris to await the tidings from the seat of war. And they came,

hot and fast, one letter sometimes overtaking the other on the road; letters full of fire and passion, filled with love, with thoughts of her, to the exclusion of every other woman, of almost every other theme. Leaving Paris on the twenty-first of March, twenty days passed by before the Directory received any news of their newly-appointed commander of the armies of Italy.

But missives to his wife came by every post. He was going forth to fight, only that he might win her approval; to make peace, only that he might the sooner have her with him. Every mile of the road to Italy that he traversed was filled with his laments; the country was hateful to him, because it stretched, continually broadening, between him and his love. "By what art" (he wrote from the scene of his first triumphs) "have you learned to captivate all my faculties, to concentrate in yourself my whole being? To live for Josephine. . . . That is the story of my life. I am dying to join you. Fool! . . . I don't see that I am only going farther away. How many lands and countries separate us! How long before you will read these words, which so feebly express the emotions of the heart over which you reign!" "To deny Bonaparte's passionate love for Josephine in 1796," says one who met them intimately, "would be to deny the evidence." Even Sir Walter Scott, by no means an admirer of Napoleon, grudgingly admits the genuineness of this passion: . . . "A part of his correspondence with his bride has been preserved, and gives a curious picture of a

temperament as fiery in love as in war. The language of the conqueror who was disposing states at his pleasure, and defeating the most celebrated commanders of his time, is that of an Arcadian shepherd." And again, Mme. de Rémusat : . . . "I have seen letters from Napoleon to Mme. Bonaparte, written at the time of the first Italian campaign, which are very singular. . . . The writing is almost illegible ; they are ill-spelt ; the style is strange and confused But, there is in them such a tone of passionate feeling ; the expression is so animated, and at the same time so poetical ; they breathe a love so different from mere amours, that there is no woman who would not have prized such letters. . . . They form a striking contrast with the graceful, elegant and measured style of those of his wife."

"At this time," says another, "Bonaparte was much more in love with his wife than she was with him. He adored her ; she was but moderately touched by his fiery transports."

This, we are constrained to believe, was true at the beginning of their marital relations. Napoleon had won her perforce, as it were ; had compelled her to accept his love, his devotion, his homage, even. She was bewildered by a passion which she did not then understand, which swept her away in an impetuous flood, which brought to her feet the offerings of a heart unsullied, the treasures of a world new-conquered.

These love-letters of the great General have been

preserved ;* they attest the most ardent passion, the tenderest devotion. . . . One of the first depicts his despair in glowing colors : . . . "Every moment takes me farther away from you, and every moment I feel less able to endure the separation. You are ever in my thoughts ; my fancy tires itself in trying to imagine your present occupation. If I picture you sad, my heart is wrung and my grief increased. If happy and merry with your friends, I blame you for so soon forgetting the three days' painful separation ; in that case you are frivolous, not capable of deep feeling. So, as you see, I am hard to please. . . . When I am asked if I have rested well, I cannot answer until a messenger brings me word that you have rested well. The illness or anger of men affect me only so far as I imagine they may have affected you."

And later in the year, after successive victories have perched upon his banners : . . . "At length, my adored Josephine, I live again. Death is no longer before me, and glory and honor are still in my breast. The enemy is beaten at Arcola. To-morrow we will repair the blunder of Vaubois, who abandoned Rivoli. In eight days Mantua will be ours, and then thy husband will fold thee in his arms, and give thee a thousand proofs of his ardent affection. I shall proceed to Milan as soon as I can : I am a little fatigued. I have received letters from Hortense and Eugène. I am delighted with the

* "*Correspondance Inédite, Officielle et Confidentielle, de Napoleon Bonaparte :*" Paris, 1819.

children. I will send you their letters as soon as I am joined by my household, which is now somewhat dispersed. . . . We have made five thousand prisoners and killed at least six thousand of the enemy. Adieu, my adorable one. Think of me often. When you cease to love your Achilles ; when your heart grows cool towards him, you will be very cruel, very unjust. But I am sure you will always continue my faithful mistress, as I shall ever remain your fond lover. Death alone can break the union which sympathy, love and sentiment have formed. Let me have news of your health. . . . A thousand and a thousand kisses."

But, though drawn to Paris by his affections, frenzied by the recollection of his bride of less than two weeks left behind him, his ardor was not quenched, rather stimulated, at the thought of what was before him. He reached his command, finding the army disorganized, spiritless, without shoes, almost destitute of provisions. He at once set about its reorganization, in twenty days had it in condition to march ; within three weeks from leaving Paris had gained his first victory, at Montenotte. The letters he wrote almost daily to his wife were full of love, of passionate devotion : but not a word about his exploits, accomplished or in contemplation. The processes of his mind were conducted in secret : no one but himself was cognizant of his plans, his projected movements. The lover and the militarist are strangely mingled in the same individual. In all his ravings, in all his tender epistles, he confines

himself to the expression of his passion. His duty to mistress and to country were things apart. He would not fail one or the other; he was equally devoted to both; but neither was entitled to his whole heart. And yet to each he gave the energies, the attention, of his entire being; there were two men combined in that one entity: the lover, absorbed in his passion; the warrior, permeated by the love of glory and country. His nature fed upon the material at hand; he loved with all the intensity of his ardent nature; he fought with all the energy of one inspired. "Napoleon found the Republic abhorrent of her guillotine, loving her army, . . . risen in mad wrath to deliver her from slavery, from invasion, all aroused, enraged, with intense patriotism, impatiently awaiting a leader"—who came. . . . All the world loves a lover—and a leader. In Napoleon, his soldiers found both combined. Aroused as he was, by love, by thirst for glory, his magnetic presence drew them; his dominant personality impelled them. He took what Republican France had prepared, what she had assembled, took it, rough and inchoate as it was, moulded it, beat it into shape, and hurled it on to victory.

Who was this newly-risen star, this young general, sent out to supersede old and tried veterans, who had been unable to make headway against the Austrian armies,—at least, of late: Kellerman, Augereau, Masséna? The astonished soldiers asked this question but once; his own deeds answered it: he was their leader, their born commander; they

followed him gladly, and ever to new and newer triumph. A month of silence, during which no tidings reached the impatient Directory from their general. But then there burst upon their astonished ears, like a thunder-clap, the victory of Montenotte, gained on the twelfth of April. Scarcely had this message awakened and electrified the capital, than there came another, the victory of Millesimo. next of Dego, then of Mondovi. Four victories in the space of ten days; the King of Sardinia compelled to abandon his Austrian allies and to place all his fortresses at the orders of the French commander. Of the first victory, Mme. Bonaparte received the information, in common with all Paris, from the columns of the *Moniteur*. She had retired with the love-letters of her hero under her pillow, never dreaming that she would awake, next morning, and find his name in every mouth. During the month succeeding the reception of this news, or from the twentieth of April to the twentieth of May, Josephine was the recipient of attentions that would have gladdened the heart of any woman. She was the most famous woman then in France; the wife of the victorious general, the best-beloved of the most highly-honored man of France.

While the slow-moving couriers were carrying the tidings to Paris, Napoleon was pushing on; the tenth of May he forced the passage of the Adda, which gave him Lombardy, and on the fifteenth he entered Milan. His plan of campaign was vindicated; he had fallen upon the enemy from the rear;

he had penetrated to the heart of the disputed country, had divided the forces of the Austrians and the Piedmontese. Modena, Naples, Parma, the Pope, all hastened to conclude a peace or beg an armistice.

In the *Moniteur* of the 25th of April appeared the first official report from headquarters, rendered with a dignified simplicity that delighted the Directory. Two days after a second despatch announced another victory, and the next day another. Impelled by the popular patriotism, the Directory addressed to their young general its felicitations, in the name of the nation. Carnot,* proud of his protégé and delighted that he had been the means of bestowing upon France this new leader, wrote to Bonaparte: "The eyes of all France, of all Europe, are fixed upon you and your army." This was indeed true, for of the other armies of France: of the North, of the

* Carnot, L. N. M., French statesman and tactician; born 1753; in 1791 a deputy; voted for the execution of Louis XVIth; 1793, head of Committee of Public Safety; organizer of victory, under whose guidance the fourteen armies created by the rising of the nation *en masse*, repelled the Austrians and Prussians, and quelled the Vendean insurrection. He was so completely absorbed in the defense of his country, that he "was hardly cognizant of the atrocities going on around him;" 1795, took his seat as one of the 500; 1796, planned the campaign in Italy, which Bonaparte afterwards changed to his own, taking the material at hand. After the *coup d'etat* of the 18th Fructidor, condemned to transportation, but escaped to Switzerland, returning after the 18th Brumaire; was appointed minister of war in 1800, but was unable to agree with Bonaparte, and resigned. In Jan., 1814, he rallied to the assistance of Bonaparte, who is said to have remarked, "I have known you too late." After the rout of Waterloo, "he alone retained his self-possession." Died 1823.

President Carnot, assassinated in 1894, was his grandson.

Sambre, of the Rhine, of the Alps, not one but was in a state of inactivity. The joy and gratitude of the people reached its climax when there arrived from the seat of war the intrepid Junot, Bonaparte's aide-de-camp, with twenty-two flags captured in Piedmont. A great festival was arranged which took place in the Luxembourg, and at which the wife of the victorious general was the center of attraction, the cynosure of every eye. At this Festival of the Victories, Madame Bonaparte, who was much admired, shared the scepter of popularity with Mmes. Tallien and Recamier. "Although she was less fresh and brilliant, yet, thanks to the regularity of her features, the wonderful grace of her figure, and her agreeable expression, she too was beautiful."

But two months had passed since Josephine had cast her lot with the obscure general of artillery; he had departed from her without noise or ostentation, he silently went to take the command assigned him; with that command he had performed such deeds as attracted the attention of the world; he was famous among the commanders of the age; she too shared in the reflected glory of his feats of arms.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LITTLE HOUSE, RUE CHANTEREINE.

THE Citizeness Bonaparte, now the adored of the Parisian populace, they lovingly called "Notre Dame des Victoires. Her influence upon the fortunes of her husband was recognized by them as beneficent. She was his guiding star. Not alone did she share in his glory; she had contributed to it; she was his talisman, his sovereign lady. Never did knight-errant or paladine worship with greater fervor at the shrine of his beloved, at the feet of his chosen one cast with greater joy the tokens of his victories. Yet, through it all, she bore herself with sweetest graciousness; she was unchanged, untouched by pride or vanity. Her knight had left her in the domicile in which he had first seen his heart's mistress. There she continued to reside, in the little house, Rue Chantereine.

It no longer exists, this abode of Josephine when she was sole possessor of the heart of Bonaparte; its very site has been a matter of dispute; yet how replete with interest its walls would be, could we but view them at the present time! For here they loved; at least one was beloved, the other adored. Here they first tasted the sweets of conjugal af-

fection ; here the first news was brought to Josephine of her husband's victories. Alas, that it should have been effaced, that those walls which once environed them in their greatest happiness, should no longer testify, though mutely, to the vanished occurrences that here transpired ! Later, when Napoleon shall have returned from Italy, the little house will be honored by a change of name ; the street in which it stood be called, instead of Chantereine, la Rue de la Victoire—the Street of Victory.

The house, when Bonaparte first met his future wife in its reception-room, was but scantily furnished ; yet everything was tasteful and pretty ; the " furniture of mahogany and the yellow wood of Guadeloupe. The low bed in her small chamber was daintily draped, and the room ornamented with a harp and a marble bust of Socrates. The drawing-room, with the exception of a Rénaud piano, was chiefly furnished with mirrors."

It may be believed that the turn in Bonaparte's fortunes enabled his wife to refurnish and adorn their home ; but she did not abandon it for a better and larger house. She was well content with her surroundings, though extravagant in dress and in personal adornment. She was too content, in truth, with her home in the Rue Chantereine, and not all the protestations of her lover-husband could for a while move her to go to him. Letter after letter arrived, filled with pictures of his desolate life without her, the object of his affections ; of the barrenness of triumphs which he would fain have her share

with him. At first she refused to be moved by them, replying coldly or vaguely to his entreaties, until finally his anger, even simulated jealousy, was aroused. He ceased to entreat, he commanded ; and, though reluctantly, and with tears, she finally prepared to journey to Italy. Her indifference seems strange to one unacquainted with her indolent nature, her love of ease, her liking for Paris. " Her grief was extreme when she saw that she could no longer postpone her departure. . . She would have given the palace at Milan, that was made ready for her ; she would have given all the palaces in the world for her little house in the Rue Chantereine." Says Marmont : " Bonaparte, however occupied he may have been with his greatness, was continually thinking of his wife. He often spoke to me of her, and of his love, with all the frankness, fire and illusion of a very young man."

Bonaparte constantly carried with him a portrait of Josephine, painted by the artist Isaby, at the time of their marriage. It was then the most precious of his possessions ; he regarded it as his talisman. The glass covering this miniature was broken, by accident, and he regarded this as an omen of evil tidings, saying to Marmont: " My wife is ill, or she is unfaithful ; " in his anxiety and jealousy reverting at once to the object of his affections ; and not till he had received assurance of her health and safety, by special courier, was his distress allayed.

" In this love," says another contemporary, " which has been said to be the only one that

touched his heart, all the fire and flame of his masterful nature showed itself." In April he wrote : . . .

" O, my adorable wife ; I do not know what fate awaits me, but if it keeps me longer from you I shall not be able to endure it ; my courage will not hold out to that point. There was a time when I was proud of that courage ; and when I thought of the harm that men might do me, of the lot that my destiny might reserve for me, I looked at the most terrible misfortunes without alarm. But now the thought that my Josephine may be in trouble, that she may be ill ; and above all, the cruel, fatal thought that she may love me less, inflicts my soul with torture, stops the beating of my heart, makes me sad and dejected, robs me of even the courage of fury and despair. I often used to say : Man can do no harm to one who is willing to die ; but now, to die without being loved by you, without this certainty, is the torture of hell. . . . It seems to me as if I were choking. My only companion, you who have been chosen by fate to make with me the painful journey of life : the day when I shall no longer possess your heart will be that in which for me the world shall have lost all warmth, all attractiveness. . . . But I will stop, my own, my soul is sad. I am tired, my mind is exhausted ; I am sick of men : I have good reasons for hating them, for they separate me from my love."

Lovers are the same the wide world over ; there is a sameness in all love-letters, of whatever race,

degree or birth their writer may have been. They are but the vaporings of the passion that, some time or other, seizes upon and possesses all men. They are rarely the genuine expressions of the soul; rather of the distorted imagination. So far as man's love could be genuine and true, Bonaparte's love was; for the time he was completely possessed by it. That it came to an end, that he was no longer swayed by the impulse of a fine passion, was a matter of course. But it lasted long—for several months. That is a long while, for such a passion—and such a man.

As for Josephine, says one who met them both at this period: "In his presence she seemed to feel more embarrassment and surprise than love. . . . She preferred enjoying her husband's triumphs in Paris, to joining him in Italy. . . ." One writer has even said: . . . "Josephine found a good deal of amusement in Bonaparte's passion. I can hear her say, with her Creole accent: 'How funny Bonaparte is!' This may be an exaggeration, with more or less of malice; but there is no doubt she was less in love with her husband than he was with her. More than this, it is doubtful if she could understand this passion, so blind, so absorbing; it must have wearied, if it did not even annoy and embarrass her. She had not then awakened to its value, could not understand that at her feet was the heart of a man so transcendentally superior to the average of men that his love was to be desired above all treasures of earth and heaven. She awoke, too late, to a reali-

zation of its worth ; of its surpassing preciousness ; she lived to regret, with tears and remorse, the passing of this passion. . . . Says Madame de Rémusat : . . . " Possibly the cold reception with which his ardent feelings were met, had its influence upon, and at last benumbed him. Perhaps he would have been a better man, if he had been more, and especially better, loved." Perhaps ; yes, probably ; but it was not her fault that she did not understand. She was light-hearted and even frivolous. She had become accustomed to accepting the homage of men as a passing tribute, merely, to her charms, her position ; not to be taken seriously. But here was a man who had taken her most seriously, who was terribly in earnest, who, having acquired the right to demand her allegiance, did demand it, and more : exacted love in equal measure for his own. No doubt it wearied her, for, though she could return affection, and was sensible to the most generous impulses, she could not rise to the heights of a passion superlative, like this, in its intensity.

No wonder that he reproaches her with being cold and unresponsive : . . . " Your letters . . . one would think they had been written after we had been married fifteen years. They are full of the friendliness and the feelings of life's winter . . . What more can you do to distress me ? Stop loving me ? That you have already done. Hate me ? Well, I wish you would. Everything degrades me except hatred ; but indifference—Still, a thousand kisses, tender, like my heart."

This tension cannot endure, it is impossible that jealousy shall not supervene ; it does ; he threatens her, with all the frenzy of a wronged and outraged lover. " What are you doing? Why do you not come to me ? If it is a lover that detains you, beware Othello's dagger." In his heart he knew it was no lover ; but lovers do not consult their reason ; they cannot ; reason has fled.

Neither threats nor suspicions moved her until the last moment, when, Junot and her husband's brother, Joseph, united in persuading her to accompany them to Italy. She had feigned sickness, had written him of a possible pregnancy as the cause of her delay, at news of which he was filled with remorse, at the same time with rapture. He wrote to Joseph :

" My friend, I am in despair about my wife ; the only creature in the world whom I love is ill, and I am oppressed with the most gloomy forebodings because of her condition. See her, I beseech you, and tell me exactly how she is Reassure me, tell me the truth. . . . I am alone, given over to fears and ill-health ; nobody writes to me, and I feel deserted by all, even by you. If my wife is able to stand the journey, I desire that she should come to me, for I need her. I love her to distraction, and I can no longer endure this separation. If she has ceased to love me, my mission on earth is finished. I leave myself in your hands, my best of friends, and I beseech you to so arrange matters that my courier will not be obliged to remain in Paris more than six

hours, to hasten his return with the news which will give me new life."

It was at this time that Bonaparte wrote his wife the longest, the most eloquent, the most passionate of his epistles. It was dated

TORTONA, MIDI, le 27 Prairial, An IV. de la République (15th June, 1796).

"To JOSEPHINE—

"My life is a perpetual nightmare.—A black presentiment makes even breathing difficult. I am no longer alive; I have lost more than life, more than happiness, more than peace; I am almost without hope. I am sending you a courier. He will stay only four hours in Paris, and then will bring me your answer. Write me at least ten pages; that is the only thing that can console me in the least. You are ill? You love me; I have distressed you; you are with child, and I do not see you. This thought reproaches me. I have treated you so ill that I do not know how to set myself right again in your eyes. . . . I have been blaming you for staying in Paris, and all the time you have been ill. Forgive me, my sweet; the love with which you have filled me has deprived me of my reason, and I fear I shall never recover it. For it is a malady from which there is no recovery. My forebodings are so gloomy that all I ask is to see you, to press you to my heart for two hours, and that we may die together. . . . Who is taking care of you? I suppose that you have sent for Hortense. I love the

child a thousand times better, since I think that she may be able to console you a little. As for me, I am without consolation, rest, hope, until I see again the courier whom I am sending to you, and until you explain to me in a long letter just what is the matter with you and how serious it is.

"If there were any danger I assure you that I should at once leave for Paris. . . . Josephine, how could you allow so long a time to go by without writing me? Your last brief letter was dated the third of the month (22d May; doubtless she had written, but her letters had gone astray). However, I carry it with me always in my pocket. Your letters and your portrait are ever before my eyes.

"I am nothing without you. . . . Ah, Josephine, if you could have known my heart, would you have allowed so long a time to go by before leaving, or if you had not lent ear to those who would detain you? I suspect all the world; everybody about you. . . . I calculate that you will leave about the fifth and arrive at Milan on the fifteenth (4th of May and 3d of June).

"Josephine, if you love me, if you believe that everything depends upon your preservation, upon your safe arrival, be very careful of yourself. Travel by short stages; write me at every stopping-place, and send the letters on in advance. . . . I think upon your illness night and day. Without appetite, without sleep, without interest in anything: friendship, glory, country; it is you, you;

and the rest of the world no more exists than if it were annihilated.

"I value honor for your sake, victory because it gives you pleasure; if it were not so I should have left all and cast myself at your feet. Sometimes I say: I alarm myself without cause; she is already on the way. . . . Vain thought; you are still in your bed, still suffering, more beautiful, more interesting, more adorable; you are pale, your eyes more languishing. . . . Truly fate is cruel, she strikes me through you.

"In your letter, my friend, take care to assure me that you are convinced that I love you beyond conception; that you are persuaded that all my time is consecrated to you, that not an hour passes without thoughts of you; that the idea never occurs to me to think of another woman; that they are all without grace, beauty and wit; that you, you alone, have absorbed all the faculties of my soul . . . that my soul is in your body, and the day in which you shall change, or cease to love me, will be that of my death; that nature, the earth, is only beautiful because you inhabit it. . . . If you believe not all that, if your love is not convinced, affected, then you grieve me, you love me not. . . . There is a magnetic fluid between those who love. (Do not all lovers believe this, and declare that occult influences are exerted for their benefit alone?)

"You know that I could not endure the thought of another lover, still less to suffer one to exist: to

tear out his heart and to see him would be one and the same thing. . . .

"But I am sure and proud of your love. . . . A child as adorable as its mother will be born and will pass several years in your arms. Unlucky I must content myself with a single day. A thousand kisses upon your eyes, upon your lips. . . . Adorable woman, what is the secret of your influence? I am very sick on account of your illness; I have already a burning fever. Do not detain the courier more than six hours, that he may promptly return bearing the cherished letter of my queen.

"N. B."

He had written her in April, shortly after despatching a letter to his brother Joseph:

"My Sweet Friend. . . .

"My brother will hand you this letter. For him I have the liveliest friendship. . . . I have written Barras to name him consul in some port of Italy. . . . I recommend him to you.

"I have received your letter of the 16th and 21st (5th and 10th of April). All the days in which you did not write me: what did you, then? Yes, my friend, I am not jealous, but sometimes disturbed. Come to me quickly; I warn you, if you delay, you will find me ill. The fatigues and your absence are too much at one time.

"Your letters are all the pleasure my days contain; and my happy days are not frequent. Junot goes

to Paris with twenty-two flags. You ought to return with him, do you understand? . . . Unhappiness without remedy, sorrow without consolation, continued suffering and suspense, if I have the misfortune to see him return alone, my adorable friend. . . . He will see you, he will breathe the same air with you, perhaps you will accord him the inestimable privilege of kissing your cheek, while I am alone, and far, very far away. But you will return with him, is it not so? You will soon be here by my side, upon my heart, in my arms. Take wings to thyself, come, come! But journey slowly; for the road is long, bad, and fatiguing. . . . I have received a letter from Hortense. She is very sweet. I am going to write her. I love her dearly, and I will soon send her the perfumes she wishes.

"N. B."

Josephine arrived at Milan the last of June, and was received with the highest honors. She had journeyed in company with Junot and Joseph Bonaparte, and not alone with the former, as the Duchess of Abrantes has stated. This is confirmed by Joseph himself, in his Memoirs. Bonaparte received her with rapture, and it is no figure of speech to say that all Italy was at her feet. But two days they were allowed together, then the young General was obliged to hasten to avert the threatened catastrophe in the field before the advancing Austrian armies.

But he left his beloved inhabiting a palace, surrounded by adoring courtiers; she who but recently

had been at the door of want. He left her with the assurance that she fully possessed the heart of this strange lover, who fought as ardently as he loved; who wrote with one hand the most impassioned love-letters, with the other wielded an invincible sword. Still, she did not yet understand, or fully appreciate, this absorbing passion. We will not discuss the question, whether any woman could have held in thrall the heart of a man so far above his contemporaries, much less a woman whose charms were already fading, whose heart was slow to respond to his passionate pleadings. But at this time she possessed it utterly.

"Once she had arrived at Milan," says Marmont, "General Bonaparte was supremely happy, for then he lived only for his wife. For a long time this had been the case; never did a purer, truer, or more exclusive love fill a man's heart, or the heart of so extraordinary a man."

He was, it may be needless to repeat, in the language of a writer of the time, "absolutely faithful to her, and at this time, when all the beauties of Milan were at his feet." We cannot but dissent from the additional comment, that "his loyalty to her was partly a matter of love, partly of calculation." It was all of love, or the signs fail that distinguish dissimulation from rectitude.

At first delighted, Josephine soon became extremely bored, not only by the numerous fêtes and festivals, but by her lover's demonstrative affection.

She was too kind-hearted and tactful to give outward expression to this weariness, but he detected it and it affected him deeply.

Leaving her safely and magnificently domiciled at Milan, Bonaparte returned to his armies in the field, hurling his commands upon the astonished Austrians before they were aware of his presence. Then followed the victories of Lonato, the last of July and 3d of August; Castiglione, August 5th.

In the midst of his superhuman labors he yet found time for a daily love-letter; the first soon after his departure, the 6th of July:

"I have whipped the enemy. . . I am dead with fatigue. I pray you leave on receipt of this to meet me at Verona; I have need of you, for I believe I am going to be very ill. I send a thousand kisses."

This letter was written at Roverbella; he could not await her, and they did not meet; but his desire to see her continued, as another, dated "Marmirolo, 17th July," assures her:

"I have received your letter, my adorable friend; it has filled my heart with joy. . . . My felicity is to be near to you. Without ceasing I pass in review the memory of your kisses, your tears, your sweet jealousies; the charms of the incomparable Josephine have kindled a constant flame in my heart and in my senses. . . . Since I have known you I have adored you every day more and more: this goes to prove

that La-Bruyère's maxim: Love comes suddenly, is false. . . . Show me some of your faults; be less beautiful, less gracious, less tender and good; above all, never be jealous, and never weep, for your tears drive me crazy, they fire my blood. . . . Rest well. Regain your health. Rejoin me as soon as you possibly can, that we may have more happy days together ere death shall part us."

The day following, another letter, equally filled with solicitude, with laments over her continued absence from his side.

"I have passed the whole night under arms. . . . I am very uneasy to know how you are, what you are doing. I have been in Virgil's village, on the lake shore, by moonlight, and not a minute passed in which I did not dream of Josephine. . . . The enemy has made a sortie; we drove them back with a loss of 500 men. I am well. I am all yours and have no pleasure, no happiness, except in your society. . . . A thousand kisses, as warm as you are cold."

As during the course of the siege of Mantua he had visited Virgil's village, "thinking upon his mistress in melancholy revery," so it seems his days were filled with her. Two days later he complains most dolorously that she has not written him during that space of time: . . . "Two days without a letter from you."

With the same pen that traces his love-sick epistles

he writes his short, terse, vigorous appeals to the army ; his announcements to the Directory of another victory. Only occasionally does his passion manifest itself in these official communications. In the month of April, in a despatch to Carnot, he thanked him for his attentions to Josephine, recommending her to him as a sincere patriot, and "whom I love to madness." Thus he alternates between his love for Josephine and his soldiers ; never neglecting the one or the other ; calm, intrepid, wisely directing the vast operations that are to result in the total annihilation of the Austrian armies ; turning from these great schemes to write his absent wife ; upon his heart wearing her letters and her portrait.

The last of July he arranged for his wife to meet him at Brescia, attending to every detail of her journey with solicitude for her safety ; but a change in Wurmser's movements precipitated Josephine into the midst of the contending armies. She narrowly escaped capture, she witnessed the horrible effects of shot and shell, saw the dead and wounded brought from the field of battle, and at one time was under fire from a hostile fort. After many dangers she reached a place of safety, was joined by her husband in the intervals of his arduous duties, and received from him continued testimonials of his affection. It was at this time that he wrote :

"Wurmser shall pay dear for the tears he has caused you."

The tenth of August, after that five-days' campaign that made him a marked figure for fame, he recommenced his letters to his wife. They show no diminution of affection, but the same love and tender regard. Writing from Brescia, which he entered in triumph, he says :

"My first thought on arrival here is to write to you, my adorable Josephine. Your health and your image have been the subject of my thoughts during all the journey thither. I shall not rest until I have received your letters. . . . Adieu, my sweet Josephine ; be careful of your health, and think often, often of me."

CHAPTER XX.

NAPOLEON'S LOVE-LETTERS.

After having secured the fruits of his recent victories, Bonaparte hastened to Milan, where he passed two happy weeks in the society of his wife. They were lodged in the palace Serbelloni, residence of the duke of the same name, and where they received the tributes and homage of the delighted Italians. Although but recently in desperate straits of poverty, with an army ragged and insufficiently supplied, the fortunes of the French had undergone a most magical change. Bonaparte was surrounded by a brilliant staff of gallant officers: Berthier, Murat, Junot, Duroc, Lemarrois, Sulkowski: Muiron and Elliot, who were soon to fall at Arcola and be replaced by Lavalette and Croisier; all devoted to their young general and anxious to gain the good graces of his lovely wife. By his side also was the young brother of Napoleon, Louis Bonaparte, as lieutenant in the dragoons, and who was to sustain the most intimate relations with Josephine's family, at a later period, by marriage with her daughter.

At this time shone forth the genius of Napoleon, as an organizer of victory and government, as a

reconstructer of society, as a king-maker and civic ruler, which was only surpassed by his genius as a commander of armies.

In the moral conquest of Italy Bonaparte was ably assisted by his wife, who won the hearts of the people while he fought their battles. He himself has borne testimony to this fact in his famous epigram: "I win battles, Josephine wins me hearts."

But it was not long the happy pair were to enjoy each other's society, for the exigencies of the war called Napoleon again to the field. That he had not allowed his love to weaken him or to cause him to forget the art of winning battles, was soon shown by the victories of Roveredo and Bassano, September 4th and 8th, which drove his antagonist into Mantua, with the shattered remnant of his army.

There is in existence a letter of Josephine's which is of great value as indicating the relative locations of the members of her family at this period:—

MILAN, 6th September, 1796.

"M. the Duke of Serbelloni leaves at once for Paris, and he has promised me, my dear Hortense, to call on you the morning after his arrival. He will tell you how often I speak of thee, think of thee, and how much I love thee. Eugène shares with you these sentiments, my dear daughter; I love you both to adoration. M. Serbelloni will give thee, from Bonaparte and myself, some little souvenirs, for thee, Emilie (daughter of the Marquise Françoise de Beauharnais) Eugène, and Jerome (the youngest

brother of Napoleon, who had been placed in the same school with Eugène).

Kindest remembrances to Mme. Campan, to whom I hope to send some beautiful Italian engravings. Embrace for me my dear Eugène, Emilie and Jerome. Adieu, my dear Hortense, my darling daughter; think often of thy mamma, write her often.

"JOSEPHINE BONAPARTE."

The tenth of September, after the decisive victory over the Austrians, Bonaparte writes to Josephine a brief account of his gigantic labors :—"The enemy has lost, my dear friend, some 18,000 men as prisoners; the rest are killed or wounded. Wurmser, with a column of 1,500 horse and 5,000 infantry, had no other recourse than to throw himself into Mantua. . . . I have been here, my dear Josephine, two days, badly lodged, and very much vexed to be so far from thee. Wurmser is surrounded. . . . The instant this affair is concluded I shall be in thy arms. A million times I embrace thee."

But enough have been quoted, of these ardent love-epistles from Bonaparte to his wife, to show how absorbing and all-possessing was the love that held him enthralled. He is constantly crying out against her coldness and her neglect; perhaps with reason, since she doubtless had more time than he to write and did not respond to his numerous communications. Josephine's letters to her husband have not been preserved, and thus it must be mainly upon his own testimony that she is convicted of the charge of

coldness and indifference. But the fact that she was so acceptable to him when they were together, that she so completely satisfied him by her presence, seems to refute the charge of indifference. He was in love; love exacts everything, imagines everything; is impatient of delay and vexed by apparent forgetfulness. Still, there was a basis of reason in his complaints; she was true to her indolent nature; *laissez-faire* was her motto, and—she was not yet deeply in love!

Towards the end of September he wrote a most dolorous letter, full of complaints of her coldness: . . . "Thy letters are as cold as fifty years of age. . . . *Tes lettres sont froides comme cinquante ans; elles resemblant à quinze ans de ménage. On y voit l'amitié et les sentiments de cet hiver de la vie. Fi! Joséphine. . . C'est bien méchant, bien mauvais, bien traitre à vous.*" . . . etc.

No one can deny that this young man was then in love; that his mistress then held exclusive possession of a heart devoted entirely to her service.

Yet, though inextricably enmeshed in love's net, he was still the formidable enemy of the Austrian armies. Austria put forth all her power to meet and crush him; he met and vanquished her bravest generals, her most skilled and experienced officers. A new army under Alvinzi, fifty thousand strong, Napoleon met with his forty thousand braves, and, in the desperately-contested battle of Arcola, lasting three days, defeated them. This hardly-won battle

took place on the 15th, 16th and 17th of November. Bonaparte triumphantly entered Verona, his troops and himself worn out with the fatigue of constant marching and fighting. Yet he allowed little time to elapse before sending a letter to Josephine, dated Verona, 24th November, 1796. . . . "Soon, my dear one, I hope to be in your arms. All is well. Wurmser was defeated yesterday under Mantua. Thy husband only needs Josephine's love to make him perfectly happy."

Wishing to give her a happy surprise, and having twenty-four hours at his disposal, Bonaparte hastened to Milan. His disappointment, his rage, may be imagined, when he found that she had departed for Genoa. Unaware of his intended visit, Josephine had accepted a pressing invitation from the authorities to visit the city of Genoa, where she was received with a magnificence unsurpassed ; where she was a veritable queen. Napoleon did not reflect that this glorious reception was a tribute to himself, that in honoring the wife of the conqueror, the Genoese were paying the highest compliment to the victorious general. His letters show the spirit in which he took her absence : . . .

"MILAN, 27th November.

"I reached Milan ; I burst into your room. I had left all to see you, to fold you in my arms. . . . You were not there. . . . You no longer care for your dear Napoleon. . . . I shall be here till the ninth, during the day. Do not disturb yourself, nor interrupt your pleasures ; happiness is for you ;

the world is only too happy to give you pleasure; and your husband only is very, very unhappy."

The next day he wrote: . . . "I can easily understand that you have no time to write to me. Surrounded with pleasures and entertainments, you would do wrong to make the least sacrifice for me. . . . Adieu, adorable woman. Adieu, my Josephine. Let fate concentrate in my heart all the vexations and griefs; but give to my Josephine days of prosperity and happiness. Who merits them more than she? I open my letter to imprint a kiss for thee.

"Ah, Josephine! . . . Josephine!

"BONAPARTE."

But he had no time to waste in idle repinings; leaving Milan he hastened again to the field, commencing that series of movements that confounded anew the Austrian armies and culminated in repeated victories for the French.

The last month of 1796 found another Austrian army in the field, under the General Alvinzi, who was destined to be no more successful in this attempt to combat Napoleon than in the first.

Bewildered by these successive defeats, yet unwilling to acknowledge herself vanquished, Austria hurled this army of 65,000 men upon the general of the Republic. As before, his tactics triumphed; the valor of his brave soldiers prevailed; the victory of Rivoli, 14th January, 1797, added another to the list of Bonaparte's unbroken chain of triumphs.

Soon after, Mantua surrendered, and in quick succession came the victories of Faenza, Ancona, Loreto, Tolentino.

Without allowing his enemies any rest, Bonaparte turned upon the Papal States, and in two weeks forced the Pope to sign a treaty by which the French were enabled to fight the Austrians on their own soil. This was in February. In March, he forced the passage of the Tagliamento (on the nineteenth); on the twenty-third he had Trieste in his possession. The first week of April saw the French army on the road to Vienna, and the threat of Bonaparte, that he would dictate terms to the Emperor of Austria in his own capital, likely to be fulfilled. Only the armistice of Leoben, signed on the nineteenth of April, saved the capital from invasion.

The first week in May war was declared against Venice, and by the middle of that month was occupied, and at the feet of the conqueror; while Genoa was revolutionized as the Ligurian Republic. The last of June witnessed the proclamation of the Cisalpine Republic, and the French army, in July, retired to rest in the Venetian States. During the progress of the negotiations with Austria, which were slow and tedious, Bonaparte established himself at Montebello, some leagues distant from Milan. Here, surrounded by the most beautiful scenery, attended by beauties of most distinguished rank, who all rendered homage to the honored wife of Bonaparte; visited by the envoys of Austria, of the Pope, of the kings of Naples and Sardinia; Bona-

parte gathered about him such an assemblage as well merited the distinction bestowed by the Italians, who called it the Court of Montebello.

The charming manners of Bonaparte's wife had won all classes to her and to him; her fame was already established; but here she first shone in a little court of her own. Here she should have been happy, if ever; her health was re-established; her husband was now with her, and not exposed to the terrible vicissitudes of the camp; while Eugéne had arrived from Paris to rejoin his beloved parent and place himself at the orders of Bonaparte, who ever looked upon and treated him as his own son. Immediately upon his arrival he was appointed aide-de-camp to the general-in-chief, who manifested for him a great attachment, in which he was justified by the boy's many admirable qualities. He was then seventeen years old, of excellent address, loyal, good-hearted, courageous, and from the first was unalterably devoted to his step-father.

Josephine had somewhat recovered her pristine gayety, and was not so overcome by ennui as in the month preceding, when she wrote to her aunt that she would rather be an obscure dweller in her beloved Paris, than the recipient of honors in Italy. She was bored to death, but admitted that she had no reason for it; for, she adds: "I have the most delightful husband in the world; there is nothing I desire that is not mine. My wishes are his constant care. He is all day in adoration before me, as though I were a divinity." His divinity did not

appreciate this devotion at its full value, it is feared ; and who can say that her subsequent doubts and jealousies were not well deserved ? Later, a few years, we shall see that the divinities have changed places ; on the conjugal pedestal is another divinity, namely, Napoleon, and before him prostrate in adoration, this same Josephine.

During the time when the Austrians were flying before the redoubtable Bonaparte, and while he was necessarily absent from his wife, he wrote the last of those letters which have given her a place among those beloved of the immortals.

He was obliged to leave her alone at Bologna, where she became very sad, wishing to rejoin him, despite the fatigues and dangers of the field and bivouac, which she was by no means capable of enduring.

Napoleon refused to allow her to accompany him, but assured her that she should rejoin him as soon the state of the distracted country would allow ; meanwhile keeping her informed of his movements by daily letters. In one of these he writes : . . .

"I send you a million kisses. I was never so tired of this detestable war as at this moment. Adieu, my sweet friend ; think of me."

The thirteenth of February he adds :

"I am about setting out to cross the mountains. The very first opportunity, I shall have you with

me; that is the most cherished wish of my heart. A thousand and a thousand kisses."

But in this continued separation from her husband and children, the constant strain upon her feelings, caused by the alarms and uncertainties of the war, plunged Josephine into the deepest melancholy. Bonaparte was distressed at the reception of this news, and on the sixteenth of February, wrote her :

" You are sad, you are ill, you wish to return to Paris? Do you not love your friend any more? This thought makes me very unhappy. My sweet friend, life seems hardly endurable since I have been informed of your sadness. . . . I pray you take care of your health, love me as much as I love you, and write me every day. . . . Perhaps I shall soon conclude peace with the Pope, and then I shall be at your side ; this is the most ardent wish of my soul. . . . I give you a hundred kisses. . . . Write me by your own hand every day." . . .

This letter was sent by a special messenger ; and three days after he wrote again, this time from Tolentino, to acquaint her that he had signed the treaty with the holy father, and would soon return to her at Bologna. . . . He still insisted upon a daily letter from her, and if a day passed without the expected epistle, he was uneasy and downcast.

" Not one word from your hand to-day. Good

God ! What then have I done ? I think only of you; I love only Josephine ; live only for my wife ; do not I merit better treatment at her hands ? My friend, I entreat you, think often of me and write me every day. You are sick, or you do not love me. Think you my heart is of marble ? . . . You do not know me. I cannot believe it of you, you to whom nature has given wit, sweetness and beauty ; you who alone reign in my heart ; you who well know, without doubt, the absolute empire you have over me. . . . Write me, think of me, and above all, love me. Yours for life. . . ."

This is the last letter of this period written by Bonaparte to his wife ; for he soon rejoined her at Bologna, and together they went to Milan, where they passed happy days in loving companionship. After five years of war, the most obstinate of the enemies of France was humbled, and sued for peace at the hands of this young general of twenty-seven years, who at one bound had placed himself above all the great captains of his time.

It was during the long delay consequent upon the negotiation of the treaty, which was finally signed the 17th October, that Bonaparte planned a diversion for Josephine in the trip to Venice. The government of Venice had invited him to visit that historic capital ; but for reasons of his own, and of which his wife was not cognizant, he declined. In language which has been attributed to her, she says : " The general well knew how to gild the

chains which he had imposed with so much good-nature and address, upon those he called his good friends, the Italians. . . . I spoke Italian passably enough ; at least to be able to reply to the compliments made me, and sometimes to the very wearisome speeches with which they honored the 'First Citoyenne' of the French Republic." Bonaparte's designs were not known to Josephine, as she was not then the depositary of his confidence, and it cannot be declared against her that she lent herself to "gilding the chains" which he was then forging for the unhappy Venetians. She was received everywhere with acclamation, fêtes and processions were made in her honor, processions of gondolas on the grand canal. The Venetians threw themselves at the feet of the wife of the conqueror of Italy, hoping to flatter him by these attentions ; at the same time paying a tribute of homage to one who had gained all hearts by her kindness.

They vied with the Milanese in their endeavors to gratify her every taste, her every ambition ; and had it depended upon Josephine alone, the fate of Venice would have been more fortunate. The sinister designs of her husband were soon made manifest ; but not in time to mar the pleasure of this auspicious journey.

After the treaty of Campo Formio had been signed, by which Austria ceded immense territory, giving to France a frontier on the Rhine, and securing to Bonaparte the fruits of his numerous victories, Josephine, yielding to a desire to visit the

Holy City, and to see her son, Eugéne, who was there on a mission, parted from Bonaparte and went to Rome.

Her reception there was in accord with her previous treatment, in Milan, in Venice ; and this homage was bestowed as well upon Josephine, the woman of heart and feeling, as upon Madame Bonaparte, the wife of the victorious general.

By this digression, Josephine was not able to participate in the homeward journey of Napoleon, which was one unbroken series of triumphal processions. For a caprice, some have declared, Josephine thus renounced the triumphant journey across Switzerland and Italy ; but it was rather from a desire to embrace her son, and to behold the glories of the Eternal City.

Bonaparte left Milan on the 17th of November, to place himself at the head of the congress of Rastadt ; thence he was summoned by the Directory to Paris. Before his departure he sent to France a flag inscribed upon which was a summary of what had been accomplished in the two years' fighting, in the succession of most splendid victories. Unlike many of his reports from the field, this was no exaggeration, but "a striking abridgment of the history of the Italian campaign." . . .

"Prisoners, 150,000 ; 170 standards ; 550 pieces siege artillery ; 600 field artillery ; 5 pontoon equipages ; nine 64-gun ships ; twelve 32-gun frigates ; 12 corvettes ; 18 galleys ; . . . Armistice with the King of Sardinia ; convention with Genoa ; armis-

tice with the Duke of Parma ; armistice with the King of Naples ; armistice with the Pope ; preliminaries of Leoben ; convention of Montebello with the republic of Genoa ; treaty of peace with the Emperor of Germany at Campo Formio. Liberty given to the people of Bologna, Ferrara, Modena, Massa-Carrara, La Romagna, Lombardy, Brescia, Bergamo, Mantua, Cremona, part of the Veronese, Chiavana, Bormio, the Valteline, the Genoese, the Imperial Fiefs, the Departments of Corcyra, of the Ægean Sea, and of Ithaca. . . . Sent to Paris : all the masterpieces of Michael Angelo, Guercino, Titian, Paul Veronese, Correggio, Albana, the Carracci, Raphael, and of Leonardo da Vinci." . . .

As a military commander he had dictated terms to the most powerful nations of Europe ; as a ruler he had prescribed forms of government to nearly all Italy ; he had enriched France with treasures of art and replenished her coffers ; he had made her armies a terror to the world.

Of his reception in Paris, when the Luxembourg was most magnificently decorated in honor of the occasion ; when the Directory assembled there the beauty and the fashion, the most powerful and the wealthiest, to witness the triumphant return of their famous general,—of this ovation to Bonaparte's genius, all the world knows, and we will not repeat what properly pertains to the history of his own life. Josephine was not there to grace the festivities with her presence ; she had voluntarily abstained from accompanying Bonaparte on his homeward journey ;

it was not till he had been for eight days established in his house, in the Rue Chantereine, that she returned, wearied with the long journey, fatigued with attentions from those who would fain have done her honor ; glad to rest a while in the arms of her hero, and in the little house where they had first tasted the joys of marital affection.

It was on the 5th of December, 1797, that Bonaparte reached his home. He still loved his wife, but his love had cooled ; at least, it was no longer an ardent passion. There had been no indiscretions on her part, as some malicious writers have alleged ; in truth, may we not go further, and deny that there ever was criminal indiscretion—on her part—during their marital relations ? This, however, is anticipatory of the Egyptian campaign, when they were so long separated, and when, without doubt, Napoleon was guilty of infidelities, in the land of the Pharaohs.

She had missed the glorious festivities of the Luxembourg, when her husband was so eulogized ; but she was sated with fêtes and receptions ; she craved peace and quietude ; she was well content with the retirement of their little house in the Rue Chantereine. It had been refurnished and enlarged, by orders of Josephine, before her departure for Italy, at an expense of many thousand francs ; but it was still an obscure dwelling for one who had brought to his feet the most haughty and powerful of the enemies of France.

CHAPTER XXI.

BONAPARTE IN EGYPT.

On the third of January, 1798, a few days after the return of Josephine from Italy, the minister of foreign affairs, Talleyrand, gave an entertainment that far outshone everything of the kind that had been attempted by the Directory. Although Josephine had missed the festivity of the Luxembourg, she now shared with her glorious husband the honors of this occasion. As an attraction, says an observer of the ceremonies, she was second only to Bonaparte. Talleyrand's ball "was the beginning of the restoration; a revival of the manners and elegance of the old régime;" and who so fitted as the wife of Bonaparte to lead the people out of the slough of revolutionary manners into the light of elegant society?

Madame Bonaparte was peculiarly adapted to serve in ameliorating the harsh manners of the society of that period; but, if we may believe the historians of that time, Napoleon was not. "He was," says Mme. de Rémusat, "deficient in manners and education; it seemed as if he must have been destined always to live in a tent, where all men are

equal, or upon a throne, where everything is permitted. He did not know how either to enter or leave a room, nor how to make a bow, nor how to sit down properly. His questions were abrupt, and so was his manner of speech."

This is shown in his treatment of the celebrated Mme. de Staël, who had conceived an enthusiastic admiration for the hero of Italy. Far from reciprocating this feeling, Napoleon held her in rather light esteem; her attentions bored and annoyed him. It was at that very ball, the story runs, that he so effectually disposed of this ardent admirer and cooled her enthusiasm.

"General," she said, immediately she had been introduced to him, "what woman do you love best?"

"My wife."

"That is natural; but, whom do you esteem most?"

"That one who is the best housekeeper."

"Ah, true; but who do you think is the first among women?"

"Madame, the one who bears the most children!"

There is little wonder that there was ever after an enmity between them; but Napoleon's subsequent treatment of this talented woman is a foul blot upon his character.

Either from desire to escape the attentions of the people, or from policy, Bonaparte led a retired life, going only to those entertainments which were the spontaneous offerings of his colleagues and admirers. To the Directory he was an object of sus-



Josephine in 1796.

picion, of envy; its members saw in this newly-risen star a rival who would soon eclipse their own glory,—which after all was but a reflection of his achievements. It is not strange, then, that they should approve and even accelerate his scheme of conquest in the Orient. During the whole Italian campaign they had surrounded him with spies, had watched with burning jealousy his unexampled career of conquest and glory; had even attempted to thwart his plans for the aggrandizement of France. Napoleon foresaw the decline of his popularity, and resolved upon a campaign that should eventually revive it. "On the night of the tenth Nivose," says his private secretary in his Memoirs, "the Rue Chantereine, in which Bonaparte had a small house, received, in pursuance of a decree of the Department, the name of Rue de la Victoire. The cries of 'Vive Bonaparte,' and the incense so prodigally offered up to him, did not, however, seduce him from his retired habits. Lately the conqueror and ruler of Italy, and now under men for whom he had no respect, and who saw in him a formidable rival, he said to me one day: 'The people of Paris do not remember anything. Were I to remain here long, doing nothing, I should be lost.' . . . When I observed that it must be agreeable to him to see his fellow-citizens so eagerly running after him, he replied: 'Bah! they would crowd as fast to see me if I were going to the scaffold.' He wished to be appointed a Director, but was debarred on account of his age; and perceiving that the time was not yet

favorable for such a purpose, he said to me, on the 28th January, 1798 : ' Bourrienne, I do not wish to remain here ; there is nothing to do. They are unwilling to listen to anything. I see that if I linger here I shall soon lose myself. Everything wears out here ; my glory has already disappeared. This little Europe does not supply enough of it for me. I must seek it in the East, the fountain of glory.' . . . He revolted at the idea of languishing in idleness at Paris, while fresh laurels were growing for him in distant climes. His imagination inscribed in anticipation his name on those gigantic monuments which alone, perhaps, of all the creations of men, have the character of eternity. Already proclaimed the most illustrious of living generals, he sought to efface the rival names of antiquity by his own. If Cæsar fought fifty battles, he longed to fight a hundred ; if Alexander left Macedon to penetrate to the Temple of Ammon, he wished to leave Paris to travel to the cataracts of the Nile. While he was thus to run a race with fame, events would, in his opinion, so proceed in France as to render his return necessary and opportune. His place would be ready for him, and he should not come to claim it a forgotten or unknown man."

The little house in the Rue Chantereine became the center of unexampled activities : dinners to officials, and headquarters for the general who was about launching himself into an unknown land, for renewed conquest and to reap new laurels. Soon all preparations were made, and, accompanied by his

wife, Eugène, Bourrienne, Duroc and Lavalette, Bonaparte set out for Toulon. The journey was more dangerous, and fraught with greater perils, than a campaign in the enemy's country, for their coach was nearly wrecked on the road. Josephine had intended to accompany her husband to Egypt, for a sea-voyage had no terrors for one who had already traversed the ocean several times; and the climate, she argued, could not affect one born beneath a tropical sun. But at Toulon, when about to embark, Napoleon forbade her to leave, and she sought a retreat for a while at Plombières, to obtain the benefit of its waters.

The campaign in Egypt, of which all the world knows the minutest details, forms no part of this history; except for the fact that it was during the absence of Napoleon, and because of it, that occurred the crucial event of their lives.

Napoleon sailed from Toulon on the nineteenth of May, 1798. He left the magnificent harbor, which he had been instrumental in delivering from the hands of the English in '93, on board the great frigate, "l'Orient" which was one of the vessels he himself rescued at the time when he was simply an officer of artillery. . . . On the twelfth of June the strong fortresses of Malta were his; the second of July Alexandria was in his possession; on the twenty-first the Battle of the Pyramids:—"Soldiers, from the summits of these pyramids forty centuries look down upon you;"—on the twenty-third of July the French were at the gates of Cairo.

The battle of the Nile took place on the first of August, and for a brief period the French rested on their rapidly-gathered laurels. Between the first of March, 1799, and the middle of June, was consummated the disastrous Syrian campaign. Jaffa was taken, St. Jean d'Acre was invested; on the 16th of April the battle of Mount Tabor. The horrors of this terrible campaign would fill a volume, yet form but an episode in the life of the extraordinary man with whose fortunes are linked those of the one we are following. The siege of Acre was raised on the 22d of May, and the 14th of June Napoleon reached Cairo, with the remnant of his army. In July, the 25th, occurred the terrible battle of Aboukir, by which the Turkish army was annihilated; but this was little compensation for the irreparable loss of the fleet, in the Bay of Aboukir, in the August preceding.

About this time Bonaparte received the first news from France for several months: that the Austrians had driven the French out of Italy; Macdonald had been defeated; Hoche killed and his army beaten; that France had lost all that he so gloriously gained for her; that she had been driven back to the condition in which he found her three years before.

And besides these accumulated tidings of evil, news came to him of more terrible import than the loss of fleets or armies: which drove to the verge of despair this man hitherto so imperturbable. He had promised Josephine she should follow him to Egypt in the "Pomona," two or three months

later ; but that frigate was taken by the English, on her return voyage ; and other things conspired to prevent her anticipated departure. That she really believed she should take the voyage, is shown in a letter written by her to Hortense, while at Toulon. While she was at Plombières she became the victim of an accident that nearly ended her life, and was the cause of her detention there several months. A balcony in which she was sitting gave way and precipitated her to the ground, causing severe injuries. Hortense was summoned to her side, and nursed her mother with assiduous care. In the month of September they left the watering-place for Paris, and, in accordance with the suggestions, or the wishes, of Bonaparte, Josephine sought out a desirable country property, to which they might be able to retire from the fatigues of Parisian society. She finally purchased the estate of Malmaison, near the village of Rueil, of M. Lecoulteux, a member of the council of ancients, and paid for it the sum of 160,000 francs, partly from her dowry, and partly from funds furnished by Napoleon.

Malmaison, though at that time in very bad condition, became at once her favorite place of residence, and it is more intimately associated with her later life than any other. She at once took up her abode at Malmaison, alternating between it and her city-house in Chantereine Street. At both places she received the most distinguished company, and endeavored to maintain a little court of the most

celebrated men and women of the day. Her success in this respect has been chronicled by a contemporary, M. Bouilly,* who enumerates such as Bernardin St. Pierre, author of "Paul and Virginia," Arnault, and Legouvé, besides the ladies already familiar to us as her friends and associates. She did not forget her duties to her absent spouse, nor the perils which threatened him from the direction of the Directory; and it was in keeping up her old associations with these men that her own character was compromised.

She ably seconded all the attempts of Napoleon's brothers to maintain the popularity of the absent general and to prepare the field for his plowing when he should return. To this end she kept herself *en-rapport* with the Directory, attended all their entertainments, and graced by her presence all the official receptions. She especially cultivated the acquaintance and friendship of Madame Gohier, a "lady of austere virtue," wife of one of the most influential of the directors. It was through her intimacy with her and her knowledge of the plans of the Directory, that (it has been conceded) Bonaparte was enabled to combat and overthrow this same Directory, on his return from Egypt. "This woman," says a writer of repute, "in spite of her frivolous appearance, intrigued like an experienced diplomatist. . . . Without Josephine, it is probable that Bonaparte would never have become Emperor. . . . It was in vain that he told her not to talk

* "*Mémoires et Souvenirs, ou mes Récapitulations.*"

politics, or meddle with affairs; she was still the most efficient aid to his plans, and during his absence she prepared the field on which he was to show himself master." . . .

Her actions were misconstrued; she was accused of indiscretions, of levity; nay more, of infidelity to her husband. These reports were carried to the Bonaparte family, and they, being jealous of Josephine, and anxious to weaken her influence with Napoleon, not only gave them credence, but themselves intrigued against her. Her name was mentioned in connection with that of a young man, Charles Bottot, Barras's secretary, who had presumed upon her kindness to him at Milan, and assumed to be the result of more than ordinary interest what was in reality nothing but her universal good-will, as towards all who came within her sphere. He had been despatched by the Directory as a spy upon Bonaparte's movements, and the general, suspecting this, treated him with severity. It was not on account of any intimacy with his wife, at that time, but merely for political reasons, that Bonaparte meditated his arrest.

"On his return from Italy," says the author of the Memoirs, "Bonaparte's domestic situation gave him some uneasiness. Josephine had kept Bottot attached to her, as he was in the employ of Barras, and knew all the secrets of the Directory. . . . But Madame Bonaparte, though she may have been exceedingly unsteady, was never culpable. On his return, as she had invited certain persons to her

house whom he had forbidden her to see, he came to an open rupture with her. In a moment of passion he drove her from the house, and gave the most positive orders that she was not to be re-admitted. In despair, she sought the house of a friend, Madame de Chateau-Renard, who finally succeeded in getting her back unknown to Bonaparte, and who persuaded him to show himself with his wife in the Bois de Bologne that afternoon, and thus stopped the scandal, which was rapidly spreading."

Josephine herself says : "This man, extraordinary in everything, was of a furiously jealous disposition ; often and much did I suffer from his suspicions. I could not see, I could not receive visits from anybody, without being subject to the most unfavorable interpretation. . . . I shall always remember those journeys to Italy ; never shall I forget the tears I shed."

An English author, whose prejudices would not allow him to take a liberal view of Napoleon, but whose estimates are not warped to the extent of condemning all with whom he was connected, says of Josephine at this period : . . . "She is generally charged with levity. . . . I do not pretend to justify her altogether ; but she was skilful enough to profit by the weakness of certain generals, to attach them more thoroughly to her husband's cause. . . . She possessed the nicest tact ; her address was incredible, especially where partisans were to be gained for Bonaparte. She used the ladies of her court to dis-

cern the most secret particulars. . . . In a word, Bonaparte was never so prosperous, and so well served, as during the years he spent with the woman who was always his best and most constant friend. . . . She flattered all parties (as she frankly says in her memoirs), and while she truly delighted in works of benevolence and in alleviating sorrow, she adroitly drew from the *noblesse* of the *ancienne régime* most valued and hitherto carefully guarded secrets, which were of the utmost assistance to Napoleon.

"She was the great *compensator* between nobility and people. . . . Bonaparte's stay in Egypt began to weary her, for she really loved the man, although she had begun to experience his despotism. She managed his interests in France, and prevented a thousand dangers which menaced them. Indeed, it would have been impossible for Napoleon to re-enter France, had not an attentive and vigilant wife managed to avert the storm which was already gathering over his head in the port of Frêjus."

These quotations show us, it may be assumed, the motive of Josephine in keeping in touch with members of the Directory. There may have been some secret reason, and there may have been, as many have alleged, a liaison between her and the secretary of Barras. But, with all respect for the opinion of those who have made this matter the subject of study, and without presuming to assert that such an event could not have transpired, we would submit that it was extremely unlikely. There was no

motive for such a course, either in the circumstances that surrounded her, nor in her own inclinations. She was the wife of the most famous man of his times; she was devotedly loved; there had been no rupture between them. Her nature, while it was yielding, still was not passionate; and she was no longer in the heyday of youth. . . . She had, doubtless, found amusement in the young secretary, who was a Parisian of the type known as the *jeunesse dorée*, light and frivolous, careless and entertaining; and she did have reasons that seemed sufficient to her for attaching him to her society. It is not denied that Josephine was vain, that flattery was acceptable to her, that she gratefully inhaled the incense of adulation. In sooth, it had become necessary to her existence, after having been the recipient of such attentions as few women of her time had experienced.

But, it cannot be proven that she was criminally culpable. Yet, this was the charge made against her, in Egypt, and which Bonaparte first heard, from Junot, during the ill-fated Syrian expedition. Bourrienne, who was most intimate with Napoleon during the Egyptian campaign, has left us a vivid narrative of this affair, which took place in February, 1799. "Whilst near the wells of Messoudiah, on our way to El-Arish, I one day saw Bonaparte walking along with Junot, as he was often in the habit of doing. . . . The General's countenance, which was always pale, had, without my being able to divine the cause, become paler than usual.

There was something convulsive in his features—a wildness in his look, and he several times struck his head with his hand. After conversing with Junot about a quarter of an hour, he quitted him and came towards me. . . . I advanced towards him, and as soon as we met he exclaimed, in an abrupt and angry tone, 'So, I find I cannot depend upon you.—These women—Josephine! If you had loved me you would before this have told me all I have heard from Junot. He is a real friend.—Josephine!—And I six hundred leagues from her.—You ought to have told me.—That she should have thus deceived me!—Woe to them! I will exterminate the whole race of fops and puppies. As to her: divorce; yes, divorce! A public and open divorce; I must write. —I know all.—It is your fault.—You ought to have told me!' These energetic and broken exclamations, his disturbed countenance and altered voice, informed me but too well of the subject of his conversation with Junot. I saw that Junot had been drawn into a culpable indiscretion, and that if Josephine had committed any faults he had cruelly exaggerated them. . . . My situation was one of extreme delicacy, but, as some degree of calmness succeeded to this first burst, I replied that I knew nothing of the reports. . . . I begged him to consider with what facility tales were fabricated and circulated, and that gossip such as that which had been repeated to him was only the amusement of idle persons, and deserves the contempt of strong minds. I spoke of his glory. . . .

"'My glory,' cried he. 'I know not what I would not give, if that which Junot has told me should be untrue; so much do I love Josephine. If she be really guilty a divorce must separate us forever. I will not submit to be the laughing-stock of all the imbeciles of Paris. I will write to Joseph; he will get the divorce declared.'"*

He wrote to his brother Joseph, a letter full of dolor and complaints, beginning "*J'ai beaucoup de chagrins domestiques*," and alluding, in veiled terms, to the passing of his love for glory, his disappointments, and *ennui*.

It has been declared, by writers inimical to Josephine, that the "idea of divorce germinated in the hour when his eyes were unsealed and the illusion under which he had lived was dispelled," namely, in Egypt, at the receipt of this report of his wife's alleged infidelity. It has also been claimed that Napoleon himself was true to his wife until this report was received; that this news caused him to turn to another for that consolation which was denied him in the bosom of his family. But this also is untrue, for his own acts of infidelity antedate the receipt of this information. It is no secret that he had already carried on an open amour with the pretty wife of an officer of his command, and of whom he seemed deeply enamored. He did not need as an excuse the indiscretions of his wife, as reported to him by a pretended friend, and which

* For another version of this affair, see the "Memoirs of the Duchess d'Abrantes," the wife of Junot.

Bonaparte was himself slow to believe. This amour was begun in September of the year previous, as Bourrienne relates, and other writers have confirmed. "About the middle of September of this year (1798), Bonaparte ordered to be brought to the house of Elfy Bey half-a-dozen Asiatic women, whose beauty he had heard highly extolled; but their ungraceful obesity displeased him, and they were immediately dismissed. A few days after he fell violently in love with Madame Fourés, the wife of a lieutenant of infantry. She was pretty, and her charms were enhanced by the rarity of seeing a woman in Egypt who was calculated to please the eye of a European. Bonaparte engaged a house for her adjoining the palace. He frequently ordered dinner to be prepared there, and I used to go there with him at seven o'clock, and leave him at nine. . . . This connection soon became the general subject of gossip at headquarters. Through a feeling of delicacy to M. Fourés, the General-in-Chief gave him a mission to the Directory. He embarked at Alexandria and the ship was captured by the English, who, being informed of the cause of his mission, were malicious enough to send him back to Egypt, instead of keeping him prisoner." *

* The Duchesse d'Abrantes confirms in every particular the story narrated by Bourrienne of the amour between Bonaparte and Mme. Fourés; she appears to think it was an honest love, and treats lightly the feelings of the injured husband, as though it were the best joke in the world. The woman, too, has her sympathy; but this may be expected from one who writes so lightly of the ante-nup-

Were not this lamentable episode so well authenticated, we should hesitate to accept this statement, implicating in a disgraceful amour one who so recently was absorbed in a pure and ardent passion. It were futile to inquire the cause of this defection ; it were worse than foolish to ascribe it to the actions of the one he so truly loved.

Among the many letters ascribed to Josephine is one that bears every evidence of authenticity, in style and sentiment. It was written after the receipt of Napoleon's accusation, and goes far to set her right in the opinion of honest and disinterested individuals. . . . "Can it be possible, my friend ; is the letter indeed yours, which I have just received ? Scarcely can I give it credit, on comparison with those others now before me, and to which your love gave so many charms. But my eyes cannot doubt that those pages which rend my heart are too surely yours ; though my soul refuses to admit that yours could have dictated those lines, which, to the ardent joy experienced on hearing from you, have caused to succeed the mortal grief of reading the expressions of displeasure, the more afflicting to me that it must have proved a source of anguish to you.

"I am wholly ignorant in what I have offended, to create an enemy so determined to ruin my repose by interrupting yours ; but surely, it must be a grave

tial amours and "natural child" of her own husband ; and the obtuseness or moral obliquity that sees only with amazement Josephine's natural indignation at Junot's flirtation with her own maid, before her face.

reason which can thus induce some one unceasingly to renew against me calumnies of such a specious nature as to be admitted, even for a moment, by one who hitherto has deemed me worthy of his entire affection and confidence. These sentiments are necessary to my happiness; and if they are so soon to be refused me, ah, why was I ever made sensible of the delight of possessing them? Far better would it have been for me never to have known you. When I first became acquainted with you, overwhelmed in sadness by the sorrows that had overtaken me, I believed it impossible that I should ever again feel a sentiment approaching to love. The scenes of blood I had witnessed, and whose victim I became, pursued me everywhere. Such were the causes that prevented apprehension in often meeting you: little did I imagine that I could for a single instant fix your choice. In common with all the world I admired your genius and your talents; more truly than others did I foresee your coming glory; but, notwithstanding all this, I was unmoved, loving you only for the services you had rendered to my country. You should have left me to cherish this admiration, and not sought to have rendered it impassioned, by employing those means of pleasing which you above all men possess, if so soon after having united your destiny to mine, you were to regret the felicity which you alone had taught me to enjoy.

"Do you believe it possible for me ever to forget your cares and your love? Think you I can ever

become indifferent to one who sweetens existence by all that is delightful in passion?

"Can I ever efface from my memory your kindness to Hortense, your counsel and example to Eugène? If this appear to you impossible, how can you suspect me of being interested, for a single moment, in what is alien to you. Oh, my friend, in place of lending ear to imposters, who, from motives which I cannot explain, seek to ruin our happiness, why do you not rather reduce them to silence, by a recital of your benefits to a woman whose character has never incurred the suspicion of ingratitude? On hearing what you have done for my children, my traducers would be silent, since they must know that as a mother I first became attached to you. . . . Since that event, your conduct, admired as it has been throughout the whole of Europe, has, in my heart, but awakened deeper adoration of the husband who made choice of me, poor as I was, and unhappy. Every step which you take but adds to the splendor of the name I bear—and is such a moment to be seized to persuade you that I no longer love you? . . . Yes, my friend, I love you with a sincerity well known, even to those who assert the contrary. . . .

"It is true I see much company, for every one strives to be foremost in complimenting me on your successes, and I confess I have not the resolution to shut my doors against any one who comes to speak of you. My male visitors are very numerous; they comprehend your daring achievements better than

women. . . . Women fail upon these subjects, and when they do not praise you they do not please me. . . . Still, it is among my own sex that I can find those whose heart and understanding I prefer to all, because their friendship for you is sincere. Of these I place first the names of Mmes. d'Aiguillon, Tallien, and my aunt. These are my intimates, and they will tell you, ungrateful as thou art, if I have thought of 'playing the coquette with all the world.' These are your own expressions, and they would be odious to me, were I not certain that you had disavowed, and at this moment are sorry for having written them.

"I tremble when I think of the dangers that surround you, of more than half of which I should be ignorant, did not Eugène reiterate his requests to me to write you not to expose yourself to perils, and to take more care of a life not only dear to your family and your friends, but upon which hangs the destiny of your brethren in arms, and thousands of brave followers who could have courage to endure so many fatigues while under your eye alone. . . .

"Here I receive honors which sometimes cause me embarrassment; for, I see they displease *our authorities*, who, always distrustful and apprehensive of losing their power, are ever on the watch. Disregard these people, you will say; but, my friend, they will endeavor to hurt you; they will accuse you of seeking to lessen their power; and I should grieve to contribute in aught to a jealousy which your triumphs sufficiently justify. When you shall

return, covered with laurels, good heavens! what will they not do, if already they are on the rack? I cannot calculate where their resentment will stop; but then you will be by my side, and I shall feel secure. . . .

"I am ever thinking of you; now transporting myself to the time when I shall see you every hour; now plunged in sorrow at the thought of the space which must elapse before your return; and when I thus conclude, I begin again. Are these the signs of indifference?

"I wish for none others on your part; and if you feel thus for me, I shall not think myself altogether an object of pity, despite the small slanders which they would fain have me credit respecting a certain *fair one*, who, they tell me, interests you deeply.

"Why should I doubt you? You assure me I am beloved. I judge of you by my own heart,—and I believe you.

"God knows when or where this letter may reach you; may it restore to you a repose which you ought never to have foregone; and more than ever give you an assurance that, while I live, you will be dear to me as on the day of our last separation.

"Farewell, my only friend. Confide in me—love me—and receive a thousand tender caresses."

"JOSEPHINE."

If this letter reached Bonaparte, it is doubtful if he could after that have any credence in the accusation. But when, like a thunderbolt, he launched

himself upon the coast of France; when the news reached Josephine that he had landed at Frêjus, she was alarmed, and justly. Not that she had been untrue to him; but because she was aware of the enmity of his brothers, and wished to see him before they should poison his mind afresh. She hastened to meet him, missed him *en route*, and returned to their home to find his door barred against her.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CONSULATE.

It was in March, 1799, that Louis Bonaparte returned to France bringing from Egypt good news for Josephine, of Napoleon and her son Eugène. She had good reason to feel proud of her son, for he had borne himself in a manner creditable to himself and to his family, as the son of the Viscount de Beauharnais, and the step-son of the great Bonaparte. He had himself taken one of the five flags captured at Malta; he was at Bonaparte's side at the entry into Alexandria; took an active part in the battle of the Pyramids; and risked his life in Cairo. In the Suez expedition the advance guard was entrusted to him, and when, on the return, a lieutenant's epaulet was given him, he was but eighteen years of age. He was complimented by General Berthier, at the same time, for his bravery and prudence. On the ill-starred Syrian expedition he made several perilous reconnoissances, and was the only officer in the army who penetrated the Arab lines in the valley of Jerusalem and obtained a glimpse of the Holy City. During the siege of Acre he was stunned by the bursting of a bomb, and Bona-

parte, who was near him, gave utterance to a cry of grief and alarm, believing him killed. Of the eight aides-de-camp on Bonaparte's staff in Egypt, four were killed, and two were wounded. Eugène ever bore himself with a modest air, always gay and cheerful; he felt for his glorious chief an affection that never changed, a devotion that never faltered; and Bonaparte, on his side, was deeply attached to him.

At last,—"Eugène, you are going to see your mother." The boy's heart leaped with joy; this was the news that for long months he had anxiously awaited. He had heard the evil reports from France; it is said that Napoleon had talked with him of the alleged infidelity of his mother; but, while still loyal to his General, to his step-father, he yet defended his mother, with a boy's belief in her innocence. He was sure that it was only necessary to bring them together, these two, whom he loved with all his soul, to effect a complete reconciliation.

Says Bourrienne. . . . "The catastrophe of Aboukir came like a thunderbolt upon the General-in-Chief. In spite of all his energy and fortitude he was deeply distressed by the disasters which now assailed him. To the painful feelings excited by the complaints and dejection of his companions-in-arms, was now added the irreparable misfortune of the burning of the fleet. He measured the fatal consequences of this event at a single glance. We were now cut off from all communication with France, and all hope of returning thither except by a degrad-

ing capitulation with an implacable and hated enemy. Bonaparte had lost all chance of preserving his conquest, and to him this was indeed a bitter reflection. And at what time did this disaster befall him? At the very moment when he was about to apply for the aid of the mother country.

"The imprudent communications of Junot at the fountains of Messoudiah will be remembered; but after the first ebullition of jealous rage all traces of that feeling had apparently disappeared. Bonaparte, however, was still harassed by secret suspicion. . . . We reached the capital before Josephine returned. The recollection of the past, the ill-natured reports of his brothers, and the exaggeration of facts, had irritated Napoleon to the very highest pitch, and he received Josephine with studied coldness, and with an air of the most cruel indifference. He had no communication with her for three days. . . . Reflection, seconded by his ardent affection for Josephine, brought about a complete reconciliation. After these three days of conjugal misunderstanding their happiness was never afterwards disturbed by a similar cause."

Having landed at Fréjus, Bonaparte's journey from that port to Paris was an uninterrupted series of ovations, and the 16th of October he entered the capital to the cries of "Long live the Liberator of France!"

When, two days later, Josephine arrived from her fruitless journey, she found herself debarred his presence. All through the night she lay prostrate

before his chamber door; but Bonaparte was obdurate; only finally relenting when Eugène and Hortense, whom he so dearly loved, joined their pleadings to hers.

Whatever the cause her husband may have thought he had for his cruel course, or from whatever reason he relented, his forgiveness was full and unquestioning. When his brothers came, next morning, to urge their reasons for a separation from his wife, they found the couple reunited and in full accord. From that time, to the end of their relations as man and wife, Josephine (even her detractors admit) led a life against which no one could urge any complaint of indiscretion, even. As the wife of the Consul she was irreproachable.

Bonaparte forgave, and as well he forgot; that was a noble trait of his character.* The double standard of morals: one law for woman and

"* Madame Bonaparte was a prey to great and well-founded uneasiness. Whether she was guilty or only imprudent, she was strongly accused by the Bonaparte family, who were desirous that Bonaparte should obtain a divorce. . . . Madame Bonaparte committed a great fault in neglecting at this juncture to conciliate her mother-in-law, who might have protected her against those who sought her ruin, and effected it nine years later. . . . Bonaparte, on his arrival in Paris found his house deserted; but his mother, sisters and sisters-in-law, in fact every member of his family except Louis, who had attended Madame Bonaparte to Lyons, came to him immediately. The impression made upon him by the solitude of his home and its desertion by its mistress was profound and terrible. . . . From not finding her with his family, he inferred that she felt herself unworthy of their presence, and feared to meet the man she had wronged."—DUCHESSE D'ABRANTES.

another for man, prevailed in France at that time as it does to-day. Although Bonaparte was privileged to reproach, to accuse, and finally to magnanimously forgive, the wife must not only close her eyes to his own infidelities, but must again submit to be a victim of them. Egypt was of the past; but other Cleopatras were to be forthcoming. It was not long, in sooth, before Napoleon was indulging in a temporary passion for an Italian singer, of whom he soon tired, and who, some years later, "deployed her charms for the Duke of Wellington."

Through Josephine, Bonaparte had hoped to draw about him the old nobility of France, and as well to cause disaffection in the ranks of the Republicans. To a great extent, she was of service in this respect; though, as he later saw and admitted, he greatly overestimated her prospective influence and her former standing with the *noblesse*. "Josephine was well qualified to play this rôle; she had the necessary ease, eloquence, and grace of manner; was exceptionally tactful in bestowing a gift or favor, and had a charming fashion of receiving people, appearing at ease in every assemblage." But her revolutionary affiliations were at first a drawback to her influence with the nobility; all her life, indeed, and after her death her memory, was clouded by those "revolutionary affiliations." It was immediately after their reconciliation, that Bonaparte received the most signal proof of her affectionate interest in his welfare and her influence in promot-

ing his vast schemes for aggrandizement. It is well known that his return to France was in the furtherance of his determination to overthrow the Directory and establish himself in power as Dictator. It was not long before this was accomplished ; less than three weeks elapsed between the time of his landing at Fréjus and his elevation to the supreme command. And it was in this overthrow of the Directory, that the assistance of his wife was invaluable ; nay, more, without it, some of the ablest historians of France have declared, he could not have succeeded. Josephine proved to him, then, that the intercourse she had so persistently maintained with the members of the Directory (and which was the chiefest of the accusations against her), was entirely in his interest ; while he was absent in Egypt she had, with a prescience that must have come from intuition, kept in touch with his enemies, and had learned not only all their plans, but had conceived means of thwarting them. No sooner had the kiss of reconciliation sealed their pact of mutual confidence, than she unfolded to her lord the information she had gained, during those long days of separation, when she was in semi-seclusion at Malmaison. Bonaparte was astonished, delighted ; perchance remorseful, when he thought of the injustice he had done her ; on the part of Josephine was naught but joy and purest self-abnegation. "Madame Bonaparte," says a contemporary, "was always of service to Bonaparte in his relations with the men of whom he wanted to make use.

She fascinated every one who came near her, by her exquisite grace and charming courtesy. . . . She was to exercise direct influence on the victims and accomplices of the *coup-d'etat*—on Barras, Gohier, Siéyès, Fouché, Moreau, and Talleyrand."

And says General Ségur: "Nothing was concealed from her. In every conference at which she was present, her discretion, gentleness, grace, and the ready ingenuity of her delicate and cool intelligence, were of the greatest service. *She justified Bonaparte's renewed confidence in her.*" As confirmatory of this assertion of her assistance in the weaving of the web around the doomed Directors, her letter to the incorruptible Gohier will be given. It was but a part of Bonaparte's scheme, to draw Gohier away from his allegiance. . . .

"17th Brumaire, Year VIII.

"My dear Gohier.

"Will not you and your wife breakfast with us to-morrow, at eight? Do not fail us; there are a good many interesting things I should like to talk to you about.

"Good-bye, my dear Gohier."

"Believe me, always,

"Sincerely yours,

"La-Pagerie Bonaparte."

Madame Gohier went, saw the trap, returned to warn her husband—but was too late. That was on the eventful morning of the 18th Brumaire, the

events of which changed the destinies of France, gave into the hands of Napoleon the reins of government, bestowed upon him the power that eventually made him master of all France. The particulars of the fateful overturn are part of the history of France. The event was a pivotal point in the fortunes of Bonaparte, in the destinies of France, of Europe, of the world.

Bonaparte had indignantly demanded of the recreant rulers of the Republic : " What have you done with that France which I left so splendid ? I left you peace, and find you at war ; I left you victory, and I find defeats ; I left you the spoils of Italy, and I find everywhere oppression and misery. What have you done with the hundred thousand Frenchmen, whom you knew, and all of them my companions in glory ? "

" The parts of the great drama which was to be enacted were well distributed," says his secretary, Bourrienne. " During the three days preceding the 18th, everybody was at his post. Lucien, with equal activity and intelligence, forwarded the conspiracy in the two councils. Siéyès had the management of the Directory. . . . There was no time to lose ; and Fouché said to me, on the fourteenth, 'Tell your General to be speedy ; if he delays he is lost.' "

He did not delay ; the morning of the 18th found him in peril, in the midst of enemies ; the close of day saw him combating them with prospect of success ; the night witnessed his triumph.

" At three in the morning I accompanied Bona-

parte in his carriage to Paris. He was extremely fatigued, after so many trials. A new future was opened before him ; this thought completely absorbed him, and he did not utter a single word during the journey. But when he arrived at his house in the Rue de la Victoire, he had no sooner entered his chamber and wished good-morning to Josephine, who was in bed, and in a state of the greatest anxiety, than he said, before her : 'Bourrienne, I said many ridiculous things?' 'Not so very bad, General.' 'I like better to speak to soldiers than to lawyers. Those fellows disconcerted me. I have not been used to public assemblies ; but that will come in time.'

"Back in the little house in the Rue de la Victoire—where he was married, whence he had started for Italy and Egypt, whither he had always returned victorious—he kissed Josephine, and told her all the incidents of the day. Then he rested for a few hours, and woke up in the morning, the master of Paris and of France."

The *coup-d'etat* was accomplished on the 9th and 10th of October, 1799 : a provisionary consulate was formed, consisting of Bonaparte, Siéyès, and Roger Ducos, who took the place of the old Directory. The General and his wife soon established themselves in the Luxembourg, where first Josephine experienced that homage of the people which ended only with her death. "It was at the Luxembourg, in the salons of which the adorable Josephine so well performed the honors, that the word *Madame*

came again into use. This first return to the old French politeness was startling to some susceptible republicans ; but things were carried farther at the Tuileries by the introduction of *Votre Altesse*, on occasions of state and ceremony, and *Monseigneur* in the family circle."

A change was to occur, and the pliant Josephine was selected by her husband to assist him in bringing it about. Most ably she assisted him, and without her he would not have been capable of effecting it. Stern republicanism was to bow before the innovating customs of the ancient court, and Paris was to experience a recrudescence of royalty ; not at first in name, but in essence. Bonaparte, if we may accept the statements of his secretary, entertained a profound dislike of the sanguinary men of the Revolution, and especially of the regicides ; while Josephine's inclinations were ever towards royalty. The new "Constitution of the year VIII." was soon promulgated ; in December Bonaparte was declared First Consul with Cambacérès second and Lebrun third. The end of this eventful century, the last decade of which had been steeped in blood, had comprised the most horrible chapter in French history, found a strong hand at the helm of power and promised a return of long-lost prosperity. Napoleon's speech to the Council of the Ancients, on the 9th of November, '99, presaged a recurrence of happier days to this distracted country : . . "Let us not seek in the past examples that may retard our progress. Nothing in history resembles the close of the

eighteenth century; nothing in the close of the eighteenth century resembles the present moment! We demand a Republic, founded upon true liberty. We will have it,—I swear it!"

The Tuileries was assigned to the First Consul as a place of residence, and on the 18th of February, 1800, the transfer was effected in great state, from the Luxembourg to that palace which had been the abode of Louis XVI. and his queen. Upon its walls the word "Republic" was written, that the people might not take alarm at the prospect of their Consul dwelling in a royal residence, yet, at the very first reception held there was visible the difference between republican simplicity and monarchical etiquette.

After the grand procession to the Tuileries, Bonaparte mounted his horse and reviewed the troops. Josephine and her friends, who already constituted a little court about her, viewing the spectacle from the windows of the palace. That evening, at the banquet and the grand reception, the most beautiful women, the most famous men, assembled to do homage to the conqueror of France and his consort. It was a veritable court presentation, and a good beginning of the road to royalty. Josephine, as usual, charmed all who saw her by her grace and affability, from the moment she appeared, leaning on the arm of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the moment of her departure, after an unexampled triumph over the prejudices and passions of that mixed assemblage, where republicanism for the first

time came into close contact with the ancient nobility.

"Mme. Bonaparte," says the Duchessed'Abrantes, who was present, "received us in the most gracious manner ; it was in such cases that she appeared to the utmost advantage. . . . She had already gone through all that a royal novitiate demanded, and it can scarcely be imagined with what ease she stepped into the station of queen."

Bonaparte established himself in the apartments formerly occupied by the royal family ; Josephine and her own family on the floor below, where she held a separate court of her own. Here she was approached by those who still had hopes of the return of the Bourbons to the throne of France. The circumstance of the marriage of the Dictator of France with one of the ancient aristocracy, and Josephine's notorious attachment for the *ancienne régime*, gave the Royalists hope ; they swarmed upon her, and through her sought to approach the First Consul.

A certain titled lady was sent by the Bourbons to asscertain the sentiments of Josephine regarding the re-establishment of the royal family in power. In drawing a flattering picture of the prospective honors awaiting Napoleon, should he condescend to merge his own glory in that of the legitimate sovereigns of France, the lady said to Josephine : "We will raise upon the Carrousal a magnificent column, upon which will be a statue of Bonaparte crowning the Bourbons." Josephine repeated this speech to Napoleon, who dryly remarked : "And did you not

tell them that this magnificent column would have as its pedestal the corpse of the First Consul?" The pretty Duchess was arrested, and the next night sent over the frontier. Although Bonaparte was willing that Josephine should entertain her friends of the aristocracy, and that it should be understood that she was accessible to them at all times, yet he did not choose she should be made a cat's-paw for royalty. She was the connecting link between the old régime and the new ; she was most useful in the scheme he had formed for the fusion of the aristocracy with republicanism ; but could not be used to swerve him from his allegiance to—himself. He had not built this great structure for the occupancy of royalism ; although he was careful to let it so appear to their friends. It was not till after Marengo that the royalists were undeceived ; that they saw clearly Bonaparte would turn to his own account this strong centralization of his power ; and then they filled France with assassins and spies.

Their last hope perished at Marengo. The world was startled by this achievement : when the Great Saint Bernard was scaled, the mighty Alps crossed in safety, and the armies of Napoleon hurled upon the Austrians assembled on the plains of Italy.

"The incredible difficulties it presented did not daunt the courage of Bonaparte's troops. His generals, accustomed as they had been to brave fatigue and danger, regarded without concern the gigantic enterprise of the modern Hannibal. . . . What little time and how few events sometimes suffice

to change the destiny of nations ! We left Milan on the 13th of June, Marengo was on the 14th, and on the 15th Italy was ours. A suspension of hostilities between the French and Austrian armies was the immediate result of a single battle ; and by virtue of a convention, concluded between Berthier and Melas, we resumed possession of all the fortified places of any importance, with the exception of Mantua.

"After our return from the battle the popular joy was general and heartfelt, not only among the higher and middle ranks of society, but in all classes ; and the affection evinced from all quarters to the First Consul was unfeigned. In what a tone of sincerity did he say to me one day, when returning from a parade : ' Bourrienne, do you hear the acclamations still resounding ? *That noise is as sweet to me as the sound of Josephine's voice.* How happy and proud I am to be loved by such a people !' "

Moreau's victory of Hohenlinden, in November, completed the humiliation of Austria, who was forced to sue for peace and to break her alliance with England.

The first year of the new century saw Bonaparte in possession of nearly all the territory France had lost during his absence in Egypt, and his arms everywhere triumphant. He was firmly established in the hearts of the French, and if anything were needed to cement their affection it came in the attempt of the royalist conspirators to destroy him, on the twenty-fourth of December, 1800.

On the evening of this day the first performance of Haydn's Oratorio, the "Creation," took place at the opera. The First Consul had announced his intention of being present, and at the appointed hour he set out in a carriage, with some friends, members of his staff; while Josephine, who was to follow immediately after, was detained by some trivial circumstance. This detention saved their lives; as it was, they had a narrow escape, the "infernal machine," as it was called, being exploded between the carriage of the First Consul and her own. The engine of death was in the shape of a watering-cart, loaded with explosives, and of such a deadly character that the street in which it stood was wrecked, houses destroyed, and many persons killed. Hortense, who was in the carriage with Josephine, was cut by flying glass, and entered the theater with blood flowing from her cheek. The escape was most miraculous; had the two carriages been together, the whole party would have been blown to atoms. Arrived at the theater, Bonaparte entered his box with composure, only the deadly pallor of his countenance showing that anything untoward had occurred. His only anxiety was for his wife, and as his aide-de-camp entered, some minutes later, having gone to inquire as to her safety, the word "Josephine?" trembled on his lips. Her appearance reassured him, and he then gave his attention to the play. The noise of the explosion startled the immense audience in attendance, and soon the truth was disseminated; every eye was directed to the box

where sat the First Consul and his wife, and from two thousand throats came cries of joy and affection ; spontaneous testimonial that he was the popular idol, that his enemies should feel the weight of their vengeance.

Bonaparte had coolly remarked to his aide-de-camp, when assured of the safety of his family : "Those rascals tried to blow me up ; bring me a book of the Oratorio." But he did not allow any time to elapse before setting the police upon the trail of the conspirators, and, though indifferent to death, he was rendered furious at the continued and relentless persecution of his enemies. He resolved to make an example of them ; the lion in him was aroused ; he pursued and hunted them out with a tenacity of purpose that allowed of no escape. One by one, they were brought to answer for their crimes, and most of them perished upon the scaffold.

During the succeeding four or five years, Napoleon hardly left the soil of France, but devoted all his energies to the repairing of the terrible ravages made by so many years of war and civil strife. In 1801, by the treaty of Lunéville with Germany, the left bank of the Rhine was secured to France, also the Austrian Netherlands, and Venice was partitioned. During that year treaties were concluded with Spain, with Naples, with the Pope, with Bavaria, Portugal, Russia, Turkey, and Algiers. Finally, by the treaty of Amiens, peace was declared between France and England, and the First Con-

sul well earned the title of the "Pacificator." Two years later, in May, 1803, war again broke out between England and France; the Senate immediately voted to place 120,000 conscripts at the First Consul's orders, and preparations for war were made on a vast scale. Meanwhile, in the year 1801, had occurred the disastrous expedition to Santo Domingo, by which General Leclerc, Bonaparte's brother-in-law, and 20,000 men, the flower of the French army, were lost.

In 1802, Bonaparte was proclaimed Consul for life, and he at last stood alone upon the pinnacle of his glory.

Another event bearing hard upon the destinies of France, and drawing upon her the observation of the world, was the *Concordat* with Rome, by which the Roman Catholic religion was restored in France. It is not claimed that the Consul was actuated by religious motives so much as by political. His motives, and the event, are clearly stated by Bourrienne.*

* "Relating to the proposition of Bonaparte to make France a Protestant country, and change the religion of 30,000,000 people by an Imperial decree,—Comte de Narbonne:—

"I will tell you what I will do, Narbonne,—I tell you how I will vent my spite on this old fool of a Pope, and the dotards who may succeed him: I will make a schism as great as that of Luther—I will make France a Protestant country. . . ."

"Sire, I see difficulties in the way of this project. In the South, in Vendée, in nearly all the West, the French are bigoted Catholics, and even what little religion remains among us, in our cities and great towns, is of the Roman church."

On the subject of religion Bonaparte's ideas were very vague. . . . The perpetuity of a name in the memory of man was to him the immortality of the soul. He was perfectly tolerant towards every variety of religious faith.

The First Consul, taking a superior view of the state of France, considered that the re-establishment of religious worship would prove a powerful support to his government, and he had been occupied, ever since the commencement of 1801, in preparing a *concordat* with the Pope. It was signed in July of the same year. . . . A solemn *Te Deum* was chanted at the cathedral of Notre Dame, on Sunday, the 11th of April. The crowd was immense, and the greater part of those present stood during the ceremony, which was splendid in the extreme; but who would presume to say that the general feeling was in harmony with all this pomp? . . .

The Consular Court was, in general, extremely irreligious; nor could it be expected to be otherwise, being composed chiefly of those who had assisted in the annihilation of all religious worship in France, and of men who, having passed their lives in camps, had oftener entered a church in Italy to carry off a painting, than to hear the mass! . . . On the road from the Tuileries to Notre Dame, Lannes and Augereau wanted to alight from the carriage, as

"Never mind, Narbonne, never mind—I shall at least carry a large portion of the French people with me—I will make a division."

"Sire, I am afraid that there is not enough religion in all France to stand division."

soon as they saw that they were being driven to mass, and it required an order from the First Consul to prevent their doing so. They went, therefore, to Notre Dame, and the next day Bonaparte asked Augereau what he thought of the ceremony. "Oh, it was all very fine," replied the General; "there was nothing wanting, except the million of men who have perished in the pulling down of what you are setting up!" Josephine, although sharing with Bonaparte his views on religious questions, that is, having no deep convictions on the subject, yet graced by her presence the rood-loft of Notre Dame during the impressive ceremonial.

In 1803 the civil code was proclaimed, that monument to the genius and energy of Napoleon, which later was perfected, and proclaimed as the "Code Napoleon." Thus these years saw his great mind working in the interests of peace, of religion, of the establishment of the law. This was the most promising period of his career, and his happy consort shared with him the affectionate regard of a contented and prosperous people. If ambition had not still pursued him, if the desire for universal conquest had not taken possession of his mind, if the desire to found a throne and perpetuate his successes in his own name, by a direct heir of his own blood, had not filled his heart, then how different would be the record of his subsequent achievements! On the day in which Bonaparte was named Consul for life, says his secretary, Bourrienne: " . . . the principal apartments of the Tuileries presented the

appearance of a fête. This formed a striking contrast with the melancholy of Josephine, who felt that every step of the First Consul towards the throne removed him farther from her. . . . She had to receive a party, that evening, and, though greatly depressed in spirits, she did the honors with her usual grace." These two, working together, the one for the re-establishment of law and religion, the other for the amelioration of society, have earned the gratitude of regenerated France ; though it is doubtful if this debt has ever been fully recognized.

At the outset, there was at the Tuileries neither established etiquette nor ceremonial ; an old counsellor of state had the management of the palace assisted by the First Consul's aide-de-camp, and above all by the gallant Duroc. "At that time," says the Duchess d'Abrantes, "vice and disorder were no longer protected by the heads of the State, but levity and immodesty in all that related to the reputation and fate of the female sex, were but too much in vogue at the moment of the Revolution. . . . It is certain that in 1800, when the court of the Tuileries was formed, society wore an appearance of morality and domestic virtue which it had never before displayed in France. The noblesse, or what was at last by general consent denominated the Faubourg St. Germain, was constrained to follow the general current." . . . The *emigrés*, another writer says : " . . . in spite of their haughtiness, were obliged to draw nearer and nearer to Bonaparte ; but in 1802 they contented themselves with

paying their court to Josephine. . . . Women like to protect, and to confer rather than receive a kindness. It was with keen pleasure that Josephine found herself sought after by people of the old *régime*, who still refused to bow before her husband, and who used to come to call on her, in her apartment on the ground-floor of the Tuileries, at the same time boasting that they had never set foot on the grand staircase of the palace. . . . As for Josephine, she was never more at her ease than in the society of the *emigrés*, for with them she felt a harmony of ideas and hopes. . . . Thiers has said that she ought rather to have crushed them beneath the weight of her pride ; but how could she have done this, when she had shared their feelings, their grief, their sufferings, and but for the ninth Thermidor would have died on the guillotine ?"

A pretty picture exists of Josephine as she appeared at this time, in 1803, at the wedding of Pauline, Bonaparte's sister, and the Prince Borghese. . . . "With her short sleeves, bare arms, and her hair enclosed in a gilt net, the meshes of which met on her forehead, she looked like a Greek statue. The First Consul led her to a mirror, that he might see her on all sides at once, and, kissing her shoulder, said : 'Ah, Josephine, I shall be jealous ; you have some plan in your head. Why are you so beautiful to-day ?' 'I know that you like to see me in white, and so I put on a white dress ; that is all.' 'Well, if you did it to please me, you have succeeded,' and he kissed her again."

The same year, 1803, witnessed the triumphal journey of Napoleon and his consort across France, and to Boulogne, where the immense flotilla and armament were gathered for the threatened descent upon the English coast. They were everywhere received with acclamation, at all points welcomed with enthusiasm, and returned to Paris convinced of the entire love and confidence of their subjects. For, subjects they were, even though the imperial crown had not been assumed. The shadows lengthening on the field of war portended an imperial ambition, the more rigorous etiquette of their court at the Tuileries, augured a return to royalty.

In order to seek benefit from the waters, Josephine went to Plombières, while Napoleon rested awhile at Malmaison, from which retreat he wrote his wife the following charming letters: . . .

"MALMAISON, 11th June, 1803.

"We are somewhat dull here, although the amiable daughter (Mme. Louis Bonaparte), does the honors of the house marvellously well. I love you as on the first day, because you are good and loving above all else. A thousand sweet messages and a kiss of love. Always thine.——"

"June 23d. . . I received your letter, sweet little Josephine. I see with pain that you have suffered on the journey; but a few days of rest will make you well again. I beg you to believe that nothing is truer than the love I have for my little Josephine.—— "

June 27th. . . . "Your letter, dear little wife, tells me that you are not well. Corvisart says that is a good sign, and that the baths will have the desired effect. Still, to know that you are suffering gives me a pain at my heart. Thine for life.——"

July 1st. . . . "You do not write me of your health, nor of the effect of the baths. I see that you are expecting to return in a week. That will be a great pleasure to your husband, who is tired of being alone. Believe me, I beg, that I love you, and am very impatient to see you again. Everything here is sad without you.

"NAPOLEON."

The baths of Plombières did not have "the desired effect," and both husband and wife abandoned hope that an heir could be born of their union.

In the meantime their enemies were not inactive. The Bourbon conspirators were swarming in the very capital; the arrest of Pichegru, Moreau, the Chouan Cadoudal, was succeeded by that high-handed capture of the Duke d'Enghien on neutral territory. His arrest, the incarceration in the citadel of Strasbourg, and finally his summary execution in the moat of Vincennes, form one of the darkest episodes of Bonaparte's career. The murder of the last of the Condés was a blot upon his shield all the subsequent glory of repeated victories could not erase. Yet, Napoleon was driven to desperation by the repeated attempts of the Bourbons upon his life; he would give them a terrible warning, that

no life was too sacred to prevent him from achieving his destiny, even though through pools of royal blood. "It is not difficult," writes one, of this dark period, "to picture the distress of Josephine, when she saw her husband and herself so beset with perils. But, with her experience of danger, she kept up a good heart. In the Reign of Terror, and on the evening of the infernal machine, she had seen death near her without a tremor. With all her anxiety, she did not lose her head; she continued to be amiable and kindly, appeasing and advising her husband. . . . Unfortunately for Napoleon, he refused to listen to Josephine; in his exasperation he lost all self-control; he yearned to do something terrible, to strike some strong blow. He represented vengeance, his wife forgiveness. . . . At the Tuileries, there was a struggle between anger and pity."

In this connection, the testimony of a witness to Josephine's agitation is of value: . . .

"'Bourrienne,'" exclaimed Josephine, as soon as she perceived me, 'what a dreadful event. . . . Did you but know the state of mind Bonaparte is in! . . . He avoids, he dreads, the presence of every one. Who could have suggested such an act as this? But no reproach can rest upon me, for I did everything to dissuade him from this dreadful project. He did not confide the secret to me, but I guessed it, and he acknowledged all. How harshly he repelled my entreaties! I clung to him. I threw myself at his feet. 'Meddle with what concerns you,' he exclaimed angrily. 'This is not a woman's busi-

ness. Leave me!' And he repulsed me with a violence which he had never displayed since our first interview after your return from Egypt. Heavens! what will become of us?'"

This was in March, 1804, only three months before Napoleon was declared Emperor of France. There was little time for gloomy reflection; events were hastening towards their consummation: towards the crowning of Napoleon and Josephine as supreme rulers of France.

What were the emotions of Josephine, seeing the approaching event, knowing that she would soon be raised to share with her husband the highest honors that a grateful people could bestow? Thibadeau has said in his Memoirs. . . .

"In France and in Europe, everything conspired for the sacrifice of the rights of the people in favor of the First Consul. At court one woman still resisted the mighty current: she alone was not blinded by all the illusions of greatness. She was pursued by the wildest alarm and the gloomiest forebodings. Indeed, Madame Bonaparte perhaps foresaw her fall in her husband's elevation to the throne; but a delicate instinct, which in woman often takes the place of perspicacity, prevented her seeing without horror a man reigning over the ruins of the republic, who owed to the republic his greatness and glory."

The Duchess d'Abrantes, who, like Bourrienne, was intimately acquainted with Madame Bonaparte, and a witness of the scenes antecedent to the corona-

tion, writes, in her Memoirs : . . . "Josephine had no gloomy presentiments, either as regarded herself or Napoleon. She was in excellent spirits, and told me that the emperor had that morning made her try on the crown which next day he was to place on her head in the eyes of France. And she shed tears of joy when she mentioned this."

It would seem, in fact, that Josephine was not possessed of that perspicacity or prescience, which enabled her to foretell the disastrous termination of the empire ; though she may have had some strong suspicion that the elevation of her husband would have the effect of increasing his ambitions and reflect unhappily upon herself. Bourrienne himself says. . . .

"Josephine, whose susceptibility appears to me even now excusable, well knew my sentiments on the subject of Bonaparte's founding a dynasty. . . . I remember that one day, after the publication of the parallel of Cæsar, Cromwell, and Bonaparte, Josephine, having entered our cabinet without being announced, approached Bonaparte softly, seated herself on his knee, passed her hand gently through his hair and over his face, and said to him, in a burst of tenderness : 'I entreat you, Bonaparte, do not make yourself a king. . . . It is that wretch Lucien who urges you to it. Do not listen to him.'

"Bonaparte replied without anger, and even smiling as he pronounced the words, 'You are mad, my poor Josephine. It is your old dowagers of the Faubourg St. Germain, who tell you all these

fables. . . . Come, now, you interrupt me ; leave me alone.'

"I said to her, one day : 'No sovereign in Europe has so much power as he has. I am sorry for it, Madame, but I really believe that, in spite of yourself, you will be made Queen or Empress.'

"Madame Bonaparte had allowed me to speak without interruption, but when I pronounced the words Queen and Empress she exclaimed : 'My God, Bourrienne, such ambition is far from my thoughts. That I may always continue the wife of the First Consul is all I desire. Say to him all that you have said to me. Try and prevent him from making himself king. He has so much confidence in you, Bourrienne.'"

CHAPTER XXIII.

"YOUR MAJESTY."

THE coronation took place on the second of December, 1804, in the Church of Notre Dame, which had been newly painted and most magnificently decorated for this great occasion. . . . We have, in the pages of Bourrienne, a concise account of this ceremony, which was witnessed by a prodigious concourse of spectators.

"The Pope set out from the Tuileries and proceeded along the quay to the archiepiscopal palace, whence he repaired to the choir by a private entrance.

"The Emperor, with the Empress, went by the Carrousal. . . . The procession, truly a magnificent sight, was opened by the already numerous body of courtiers : next came the marshals of the Empire, wearing their honors; then the dignitaries and high officers of the Crown ; and lastly the Emperor, in a dress of state. At the moment of his entering the cathedral there was a simultaneous shout of '*Vive l'Empereur.*' The procession passed along the middle of the nave and arrived at the choir, facing the high altar. This scene was not less imposing ;

the galleries round the choir were filled with the handsomest women whom the best company could produce, and most of whom rivaled in the luster of their beauty that of the jewels with which they were covered.

"His Holiness went to meet the Emperor at a tribune which had been placed in the middle of the choir; there was another on one side for the Empress. After saying a short prayer there they returned, and seated themselves on the throne at the end of the church facing the choir, where they heard mass, which was said by the Pope.

"They went to make the offering, and came back; they then descended from the platform of the throne and walked in procession to receive the holy unction. The Emperor and Empress, on reaching the choir, replaced themselves at their tribunes, where the Pope performed the ceremony.

"He presented the crown to the Emperor, who received it, put it himself upon his head, took it off, placed it on that of the Empress, removed it again, and laid it on the cushion where it was at first. A smaller one was immediately put upon the head of the Empress. All the arrangements had been made beforehand; she was surrounded by her ladies; everything was done in a moment, and nobody perceived the substitution which had taken place.

"The procession moved back to the platform, and there the Emperor heard the *Te Deum*. The Pope himself went thither, at the conclusion of the service,

as if to say: *Ite missa est.* The Testament was presented to the Emperor, who took off his glove, and pronounced his oath, with his hand upon the sacred book.

"He went back to the archbishop's palace by the same way he had come, and entered his carriage. The ceremony was very long; the procession returned by a different route, and it was getting dusk when the Emperor arrived at the Tuileries."

"The ceremony," says Mme. de Rémusat, another of the spectators, "was grand and impressive. A general movement of admiration was noticed at the moment when the Empress was crowned. She was so unaffected, so graceful, as she advanced towards the altar, she knelt with such simple elegance, that all eyes were delighted with the picture she presented. . . .

"When, however, she had to walk from the altar to the throne, there was a slight altercation with her sisters-in-law, who, by order of their imperial brother, carried her mantle. Feeling themselves slighted, they bore their burden with such ill-grace that I observed at one moment the new-made Empress could not advance a step. The Emperor perceived this, and spoke a few short sharp words to his sisters, which speedily brought them to reason."

Perhaps the happiest description of Josephine's participation in the coronation ceremonies is from the pen of another witness, the Duchess d' Abrantes, who says:

"When the moment arrived for Josephine to take

an active part in the grand drama, she descended from the throne and advanced towards the altar, where the Emperor awaited her, followed by her retinue of court ladies, and having her train borne by the Princesses Caroline, Julie, Eliza, and Louis. One of the chief beauties of the Empress Josephine was not merely her fine figure, but the elegant turn of her neck, and the way in which she carried her head; indeed, her deportment altogether was conspicuous for dignity and grace. I have had the honor of being presented to many *real* princesses—to use the phrase of the Faubourg Saint Germain—but I never saw one who, to my eyes, presented so perfect a personification of elegance and majesty.

"In Napoleon's countenance I could read the conviction of all I have just said. He looked with an air of complacency at the Empress, as she advanced towards him; and when she knelt down, when the tears which she could not repress fell upon her clasped hands, as they were raised to Heaven, or rather to Napoleon,—both then appeared to enjoy one of those fleeting moments of pure felicity which are unique in a lifetime, and serve to fill up a lustrum of years. The Emperor performed with peculiar grace every action required of him during the ceremony; but his manner of crowning Josephine was most remarkable; after receiving the small crown surmounted by the cross, he had first to place it on his own head, and then to transfer it to that of the Empress. When the moment arrived for placing the crown on the head of the woman whom popular



Napoleon at Malmaison.

superstition regarded as his good genius, his manner was almost playful. He took great pains to arrange this little crown which was placed over Josephine's tiara of diamonds ; he then put it on, took it off, and finally put it on again, as if to promise her she should wear it gracefully and lightly. My position enabled me fortunately to see and observe every minute action and gesture of the principal actors in this magical scene."

The coronation was but the final act in the drama, which had been some six months upon the boards ; for it was on the eighteenth of May, preceding, that the Second Consul, Cambacérès, President of the Senate, had come to Saint Cloud to announce to the First Consul and his wife their elevation to the throne, accompanied by all the senators, and escorted by a large body of troops.

He "made a set speech, and gave Bonaparte, for the first time, the title of 'Your Majesty.' Bonaparte took it calmly, just as though he had borne the title all his life." The Senate then proceeded to the apartment of Madame Bonaparte, who in her turn was proclaimed Empress, and addressed by Cambacérès in the following speech :

"Madame, the Senate has still an agreeable duty to perform, that of offering to your Imperial Majesty the homage of its respect and the expression of the gratitude of the French people. Yes, Madame, France makes known the good you are never tired of doing. It says that, always accessible to the unfortunate, you never exercise your influence over

the head of the State, save to console their misery, and that, to the pleasure of obliging them, your Majesty adds that amiable delicacy which makes gratitude sweeter and the benefit more precious. This happy disposition is a sure token that the name of the Empress Josephine will be the signal of consolation and hope, and, as the virtues of Napoleon will always serve as an example to his successors to teach them the art of governing nations, so the undying memory of your kindness will teach their august companions that the art of drying tears is the surest way of ruling over men's hearts.

"The Senate congratulates itself on being the first to greet your Imperial Majesty, and he who has the honor to be its spokesman presumes to hope that you will deign to count him among the number of your most faithful servants."

"To this harangue," says Madame de Rémusat, "Josephine replied with that natural grace which always raised her to the level of any position, however lofty, in which she might be placed."

And now she had reached the loftiest position, was at the summit of earthly grandeur; Josephine, the obscure Creole of Martinique, was now Her Majesty, Empress of all the French. She had been represented as viewing the preparations for the coronation with melancholy forebodings; again, essaying a trial of the imperial crown with badinage and laughter. She herself has said: . . . "As wife of the First Consul I was happy, indeed, because I was enabled to render him important services; but,

elevated to the rank of Empress, I found all the avenues to the throne so beset by men of every condition, and every faction, that I ceased to exert the same empire over Napoleon's mind.

"But Napoleon began to neglect me. More than one Italian beauty momentarily arrested his gaze. Constancy was not the favorite virtue of the modern Charlemagne. . . . But he was terribly afraid of the influence of women, and ever on his guard against allowing them the slightest dominion over him."

Josephine was always afraid, and not without reason, that Bonaparte would be carrying on an intrigue with other women; and hence arose a kind of restraint, which she manifested whenever a young and pretty woman was presented to her. Her readers, or *lectrices* were frequently the objects of Napoleon's transient adoration, and for this reason they were constantly being changed. One of them, the young and beautiful Mlle. G.—— had the hardihood to repel, or to affect to, this conqueror of so many countries and winner of so great a multitude of female hearts. Josephine, who had long suspected a liaison between these two, one day surprised her husband at the feet of the lovely *lectrice*. The young lady was equal to the occasion: "Come," said she to the Empress, as she made her appearance so unexpectedly upon this private stage, "come, and remind your husband, what he has apparently forgotten, that he is that Napoleon whose duty it is to furnish to his people examples of virtue and wisdom." The reader was sent away,

of course, and was soon after married to a gentleman of some importance in the military service. Napoleon is said to have exclaimed, when he heard of her marriage, "So much the better. I shall send her husband so far from France that she will be glad to come and humble herself before me, to prostrate herself at *my* feet, soliciting his return."

It is doubtful if he uttered this despicable sentiment; but if he did, he never carried out the intention, for he was not capable of meanness and petty revenge. We cannot, however, remain blind to his numerous and indiscreet amours, which often took place before the very eyes of the Empress. And what must have been the feelings of his royal consort, when Napoleon was thus contravening the canons of his own moral code?

We know, from evidence that has been accepted as irrefutable, that she maintained for Napoleon a lasting affection, and which he, in a way, requited. Yet, how numerous were the offenses which he put upon her. . . . "Whenever he had a mistress," says Madame de Rémusat, "he let her know it, and showed a savage sort of surprise that she did not approve of his indulging in a pleasure which, as he would demonstrate, so to speak, mathematically, was both allowable and necessary to him. 'I am not an ordinary man,' he would say; 'and the laws of morals and of customs were never made for me.'

"Such speeches as these, of course, aroused the anger of his wife, and she replied to them with tears and complaints, which her husband would resent

with the utmost violence. After a while his new fancy would vanish suddenly, and his tenderness for his wife revive. Then he was moved by her grief, and would lavish caresses upon her as unmeasured as his wrath had been; and, as she was very placable and gentle, she was easily appeased."

Of his rude manners, the same writer gives an illustration; it was immediately after the death of the Duke d'Enghien, and she, in common with the other ladies of the Court, had been weeping. "Suddenly fixing a piercing eye upon me, Bonaparte said: 'Why have you no rouge? You are too pale.' I answered, that I had forgotten it.

"'What,' said he,' a woman forget to put on her rouge!' And then, with a loud laugh, he turned to his wife and added: 'That will never happen to you, Josephine. . . . Two things are very becoming to women:—rouge and tears."

But all the imperial episodes were not of a disagreeable character and only occasionally was the great Bonaparte rude to his wife.

"'You are a good woman, to plead for Lucien,' he said to her tenderly one day, then he rose from his chair, took his wife in his arms, and laid her head softly on his shoulder; and with his hand still resting on the beautiful head, which formed a contrast to the sad, set countenance so near it, he told us that Lucien had resisted all his entreaties," etc.

"Much has been said about the tyranny, violence of temper, and despotism of Napoleon," wrote the Duchess d'Abrantes. "I revere,—nay, even wor-

ship—his memory ; but I am not so absurd as to consider him a god. He was a man, and partook of the failings of human nature. Nevertheless, to speak from my own knowledge of his character,—and I had the opportunity of knowing him well—I must declare my honest conviction that he possessed a noble mind, a heart forgetful of injuries, and a disposition to recommend talent wherever he found it. Perhaps at no period did Napoleon's character appear in so exalted a light as on his elevation to the imperial authority. He had previously been the object of envious hatred, and of base persecution ; but he forgot all when the nation invested him with supreme power.

" Those who were much about the person of Napoleon can never forget the splendor which was shed over his features when he smiled ; his eyes then became truly fine, their expression softened ; and if the sentiment which produced the smile had anything truly noble in it, its effect was infinitely heightened ; it was then that his countenance became something more than that of a man.

After the coronation :

" Napoleon then addressing Josephine, said, 'I desire you will be dazzling in jewelry and richly dressed ; do you hear ? '

" 'Yes,' replied Madame Bonaparte, 'and then you will find fault, perhaps fall into a passion ; or you will erase my warrants of payment from the margins of my bills.' And she pouted like a little girl,

but with the most perfect good humor. Madame Bonaparte's manners possessed, when she chose it, a seducing charm. Her graciousness might be too general; but undeniably, she could be, when she chose, perfectly attractive and lovable. When the First Consul announced his wish regarding her toilet she looked at him so prettily, walked towards him with such graceful sweetness, her whole manner breathing so evident a desire to please, that he must have had a heart of stone who could resist her. Napoleon loved her; he drew her close to him and embraced her: . . . 'Certainly, my dear love, I sometimes cancel your warrants of payment, because you are occasionally so imposed upon that I cannot take it upon my conscience to sanction such abuses; but it is not, therefore, inconsistent to recommend you to be magnificent on occasions of parade. One interest must be weighed against another, and I hold the balance equitably, though strictly.' . . .

"Madame Bonaparte was an astonishing woman, and must have formerly been extremely pretty, for though now no longer in the first bloom of youth, her personal charms were still striking. Had she but possessed teeth—I do not say ugly or pretty, but only teeth—she would certainly have outvied nearly all the ladies of the Consular Court."

Josephine, says one who was intimately acquainted with her mode of life, had what are called *habitudes;* her mode of life was always the same. Her habit was to rise at eight in the morning,

glancing over the papers while her toilet was being performed, and perhaps receiving tradesmen and others not admitted to her salon.

At noon, breakfast, after conversation in the salon with her guests and *dames de service*. From breakfast till four o'clock a ride or excursion, and reception of friends.

From four to five o'clock, rest, in *negligé*, during which hour, if at all, she received visits from Bonaparte. Then a second toilet, and dinner at six; Bonaparte rarely staying longer than twenty minutes at the table.

In the evening the ministers, marshals, generals, etc., made their calls. If the Emperor came, which was never before nine, he remained not to exceed a quarter-hour, unless he wanted to form a party at whist,—at which he was very inattentive, being so much absorbed in other things. This party always consisted of ladies.

After the game was over he would abruptly leave the salon; but Josephine would remain until retiring-time, though sometimes so fatigued she could not sleep, and often lie awake, conversing with her *femme-de-garde* till three in the morning.

"After the adoption of the rigid court etiquette," says Madame de Rémusat, "the wife of Napoleon was almost in the same position of dependence as the ladies of her train. In proportion as Bonaparte's affairs increased in magnitude, she became a stranger to them.

"European politics, the destiny of the world, mat-

tered little to her; her thoughts did not reach to heights which could have no influence on her own fate. At this period she was tranquil as to her own lot and happy in that of her children, and she lived a life of peaceful indifference, behaving to all with equal graciousness, showing little or no special favor to any one, but a general good will."

We cannot allude to the numerous fêtes and festivals that followed after the coronation. The city of Paris distinguished itself by presenting to the Empress a magnificent toilet set of gold, accompanied by a speech from the president of the municipality in which most complimentary allusions were made to the beneficent influence Josephine had always exerted upon the morals of all classes of society since the period of the Revolution.

But of all the demonstrations of which she was the object, perhaps Josephine was touched the most by that from the people of her natal country, Martinique. Upon the reception of the news, the islanders abandoned themselves to the most joyous demonstrations, giving up an entire week to fêtes and thanksgivings. Madame de La-Pagerie was persuaded to emerge from her retreat at Sannois and become the honored guest of the Governor and the admiral of the fleet who had brought the glad tidings to Martinique. Preceded by a numerous cortège and leaning upon the arm of the admiral, Madame de La-Pagerie was conducted to the door of the church of Fort Royal, where she was received by the ecclesiastics and persuaded to take her seat

upon a daïs, like a throne, which had been erected in the choir.

After she was thus seated in state, the authorities took the oath of allegiance to the Emperor, and a *Te Deum* concluded the ceremonies.

The mother of the Empress was then conducted to the house of the Governor, where a banquet was spread with two hundred covers, at the coming on of night. The Governor presented the toast to the Empress :—"To her Majesty, the Empress Josephine. It was reserved to grace and beauty to share the throne of France with genius and victory."

The health of Madame de La-Pagerie was :—"To the mother of our Empress ; the model of virtues in the colony. France is indebted to her for those which adorn the throne in the person of her august daughter."

Returning to Trois Ilets, Madame de La-Pagerie resumed her life of patriarchal simplicity, and never after left her chosen retreat. But the Creoles bestowed upon her the title of the Empress-Mother, and persisted in surrounding her with every attention.

It was while at the summit of her grandeur that Josephine made a last but ineffectual attempt to draw her mother from her hermitage to join her in France. The addresses of the inhabitants of Martinique reached Josephine just as she was setting out with the Emperor for Milan, where the latter was to be crowned King of Italy.

This first year of the Empire ought to be con-

sidered the happiest of Josephine's life. She had no desire to share with her husband the crown of Italy, and experienced no chagrin that he set it upon his head alone. Her cup of joy was full when her royal spouse bestowed upon her son Eugène, the title of a Prince of the Empire and Archchancellor of State. And later, another proof was given of the esteem and love Napoleon felt for his step-son in his appointment as Viceroy of Italy. Rendered supremely happy by the elevation of her son to this position, yet made temporarily unhappy at the prospect of separation from him, Josephine left Milan three days after the proclamation and entered upon a journey through the chief cities of Italy. She revisited the scenes of her former triumphs, when her husband was making his conquering marches and winning the name that made all Europe tremble, and was everywhere received with enthusiasm. Although contemplating a longer sojourn in this country, their stay was suddenly terminated by the news of another coalition against Napoleon, who at once departed for Paris.

The Empress returned to the Tuileries where she remained while Bonaparte set in motion the vast enginery of war, preparatory to the invasion of Austria. Josephine detested constraint and formality, and, surrounded as she was by the rigid etiquette of the imperial court, she often repeated her favorite complaint: "Alas, how all this wearies me . . . I have not a moment to myself. It would be better for me were I the wife of a laborer."

Soon after the coronation, a deputation of distinguished men arrived from her native island, Martinique, to felicitate her on her elevation to supreme power. After an audience with the Emperor, the deputation presented themselves before their august countrywoman and presented her with the following address: . . . "Madame, the French revere and cherish in your Imperial Majesty, the country in which their august sovereign first saw the light of day, that sovereign who uses her power but to contribute to their happiness. Martinique is proud to have had born within her limits one whom Providence had reserved for such high destinies, and who shows herself so worthy of her honors. This colony is content to shine in the reflected splendor which surrounds her. Its people hear with joy that mildness and beneficence are seated on the throne by the side of your Majesty; that she is more adorned by her graces than by her crown; that the advantages which are hers through her high rank, disappear under the charm of her personal qualities: and, much more touched by her goodness than by her grandeur, they offer her this homage, the outcome of the purest sentiment."

Reference having been made to the attempts of Josephine to draw her mother from her island home, in this connection, it may be at least relevant to introduce a few of her letters, written at various times during the Consulate and the Empire.

In them all we perceive the loving daughter, the dutiful child, unstained by ambition and unspoiled

by the exercise of power. The first of this series is dated—

"PARIS, 18th October, 1801. . . .

"DEAR MAMMA,—I send this letter by the frigate which is despatched to Guadeloupe to announce the peace with England. . . . It is a long time, my dear mamma, since we have received news of you ; but we think of you often, and hope you are well. Are you happy, and do you still think of your Yeyette?

"Eugène, is lieutenant-colonel in Bonaparte's guard of cavalry ; he often expresses the desire to go to Martinique to see his grandmamma. Hortense is now as large as I am ; she draws very well, and at this moment is painting a picture of Bonaparte taking a walk in the park. This picture she intends for you.

"Say to my Uncle Tascher, I pray you, that I desire him to come as quickly as possible to Paris, to give Bonaparte information upon Martinique ; he can now come by way of London, as communication is open between France and England.

"Bonaparte . . . very much desires that you will come to France, if you think you can live in a climate so different from yours. If you can do so, try to arrive in the month of June. You ought to love Bonaparte, for he makes your daughter very happy ; he is good and amiable, in every way a charming man ; and, he loves your Yeyette very, very much.

"Adieu, my dear mamma ; I love you with all my

heart; your grandchildren join me in embracing you.

"LA PAGERIE-BONAPARTE.

"Remember me to all my family and friends, and embrace my nurse for me."

Seven months later, in May, 1802, she writes: . . .

"MY DEAR MAMMA This letter I send by the hand of citizen Bertin. The choice that Bonaparte has made of him as prefect of Martinique, proves the esteem he has for him, and the care he has for the well-being of the colony. Citizen Bertin will give you the latest news about me, and will also give you a gold box, inlaid with diamonds, on which are the portraits of Bonaparte, of myself, and my children. It is a present to you from my husband, who hopes that it will please you, and that you will enjoy it a long time. I also wish to make you a present, my dear mamma, so I send you a beautiful chaplet given me and blessed by the hand of the Holy Father, the Pope. I cannot better prove to him the esteem in which I hold his present, than by giving it to the most virtuous and best of women. . . .

"Bonaparte and I both have the greatest desire that you shall come to live with us. I hope that you will accede to our wishes, and the year will not pass before we shall enjoy this great happiness. I wrote to you at the time of the marriage of your granddaughter with one of the brothers of Bonaparte.

He is the fourth brother, and was raised by Bonaparte; is colonel in a regiment of dragoons, and is only twenty-three years old.

"They have been married but four months and already have sweet hopes of an heir. Soon I shall be a grandmother, but that seems to me very pleasant.

"Write me often and give me news of all the family.

"Advise my uncle to come to France, and to bring us all his boys. He ought also to send me my god-daughter. I will profit by every occasion, my dear mamma, to write to you, and to renew the assurance of the tender attachment of your daughter. Good-bye, dear and good mother mine. I embrace you with all my heart.

"La Pagerie-Bonaparte.

"I relinquish the pen to my children, who wish to write you. Write to Bonaparte, it will please him. Send me all the kinds of American seeds, fruits, sweet potatoes, bananas, oranges, mangos,—in fact, every kind you can. . .

"Kindest remembrances to all friends."

Six months later, November, 1802. . . .

"Bonaparte is now visiting Havre, Rouen, in fact, all of Normandy, and I am accompanying him on the journey. Judge of my surprise and pleasure, this morning, to learn that a vessel was about to

depart for Martinique. My pleasure was all the greater, as there had already set sail two vessels, before I had learned their intention to depart, and therefore could not profit by the occasion to write you. . . . However, Bonaparte, sailing near to them, hailed the captain and told them to give you news of us. I am much happier, my dear mother, to give you this news myself, and to assure you that your children and grandchildren love you very much, have the greatest desire to see you, and that there is but one thing lacking to my happiness, and that is to have you near me. Give me, my dear mother, this satisfaction, and there will be *nothing* lacking. Sell your property in Martinique, and come buy some in France. You ought to *want* to live here now, with your children ; you cannot stay there in the colonies, after knowing how much they wish you to be with them. . . .

"I send you the particulars of the accouchement of Hortense ; three weeks ago she presented us with a beautiful little boy. Bonaparte will have him baptized, on our return, and will stand as godfather, and I as godmother. He will be called Napoleon. Louis Bonaparte wrote you to announce his birth ; he is the happiest of men, to be a father, and above all, of a big boy. It gives me pleasure to tell you that their marriage is a very happy one, and that they love each other very much.

"By this time my brother-in-law, Jerome Bonaparte, should be with you. I am sure you will like him very much. Please kiss him on one cheek for

me, and give him a little slap on the other for not having written us. Eugène is with us at Havre, and is very well. Bonaparte has just named him Colonel. Tascher is liked by every one; he is a model boy, and Bonaparte has placed him in a regiment. He is very happy. You can assure my uncle, that if he were my own child, I could not love him any better than I do dear Tascher. You would do well, my dear mamma, to profit by the vessels which touch at Havre to send me the trees and seeds which I asked you for. Send me every kind possible, even those which come from the woods. I send you the papers, in which you will see the welcome Bonaparte received at Rouen; it would be difficult to paint the enthusiasm of the people wherever Bonaparte is seen.

"Adieu, my dear mother; we embrace you with all our hearts, and we love you always the same."

The letters during the empire were in no wise different from those of the consulate, as these two, appended, written at intervals of two years, will testify. Like the others, they are extracted from the archives of the La-Pagerie family.

"PARIS, 30th January, 1805. . .

"MY DEAR MAMMA—I send you news by my cousin, who sails for Martinique. I am sure you will be glad to learn from him everything that concerns the Emperor and interests me. I will not enter into details, but will give them to him to tell you,

that you may know the many proofs of attachment with which my family is loaded by the Emperor, and the happiness of your daughter. There is nothing he would not do to see you in France, and as well as myself, contribute to make your days peaceful and happy.

"Make note of this, my dear mamma, and believe that I shall not be truly happy until you have come to share my happiness.

"Pray remember me to my uncle, and to my aunt, Mdlle. de La-Pagerie.

"Write me of everything that concerns you. I shall assume, with pleasure, all the advances you wish to make; and in this matter, as in all others, I pray you to address me direct, and not the governor or any one else; it suffices me to know your desires to have them gratified. . . . You have another grandson; as I have already announced to you, the Princess Louis has given birth to another boy, who will be baptized by the Pope and named by the Emperor.

"JOSEPHINE.

"I send you a number of chaplets which have been blessed by the Holy Father."

It was in the month of May that Napoleon was anointed King of Italy. That summer, the coalition between England, Russia, Sweden, and Austria was formed, by which these nations hoped to hurl

* "*Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine*," etc.

from his throne this monarch who seemed to aim at universal dominion.

Returning swiftly to France, by the middle of July Bonaparte was at Fontainebleau ; on the 25th of September his army crossed the Rhine ; just a month later, the surrender of Mack, at Ulm, terminated this swift and decisive campaign. Almost the same day of the Ulm surrender occurred the battle of Trafalgar, by which the French naval marine was swept from the sea ; but by his achievements on land Bonaparte retrieved his losses on the ocean.

Dec. 2d, 1805, the terrible battle of Austerlitz swept the Russians and Austrians from his path, the first anniversary of his coronation. Swift was he to avenge the treachery of his enemies ; terrible to punish ; his maneuvers and combinations were the alarm and the admiration of his foes. Yet, fascinating as it might be to follow this genius of battles in his unexampled career of conquest, we must not allow ourselves to be diverted from the object in view : to show Napoleon in his relation to his loving and loyal spouse.

Josephine accompanied him as far as Strasbourg, in order to be near the scene of conflict, that she might receive quickly the tidings of his victories. For her faith in Napoleon never wavered ; it did not seem to occur to her that he could be other than victorious. She had changed, since the Italian campaign, when, as we have seen, she hesitated long before setting out for the cities of Italy. Now

she could not be near enough to her husband, could not be satisfied unless permitted to accompany him on all his campaigns.

Again, there had been a change in Napoleon; this change we will show in his letters, written in the heat of battle, as during the Italian conquests; still breathing regard and deep attachment, though not pervaded by the fire of passion, as at that earlier period. The whole world knew of his achievements, many years ago; former generations followed upon the course of his victories; but few have been cognizant of the heart-history of this wonderful man and the beloved companion of his agitated life.

We do not find in these later letters that exuberance, that amorous exaggeration, of the first. The lover of twenty-six is now thirty-seven; the general of the army, then just rising into fame, is now Emperor of France; his genius has expanded, but his heart is the same. As in Italy, we find the names of his immortal battle-fields in conjunction with expressions of love and solicitude; but now they are those made famous by his exploits on this wonderful campaign: Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Eylau, Friedland, and Wagram.

It was on the first of October that Bonaparte took command of his army; the next day he wrote the first letter to Josephine, from Manheim: "I am still here and in good health. . The grand maneuvers have begun; the army of Wurtemburg and Baden is now united with mine. I am in good position, and I love thee. . . . NAPOLEON."

On the fourth of October he writes: "I am at Louisburg. There is nothing new; my army is on the march; the weather is superb. I have completed my union with the Bavarian Army. I am in the best of health. I expect in a few days to have something interesting to write you. (As indeed he did have.) Take good care of thy health, and believe me, ever thine." *

The next day he writes: . . . "I leave immediately to continue the march. Thou wilt be, my friend, five or six days without news from me; but do not let that trouble thee. Everything is going well and as I expected. I have just assisted at the marriage of the son of the Elector with a niece of the King of Prussia, and I desire to make them a marriage present of some thirty-five or forty thousand francs. Please select it and send by one of my chamberlains when he returns to rejoin me. Adieu, my friend; I love and embrace thee."

As the Emperor had announced to Josephine, five or six days passed without news of him; but then

* "I never heard of any one *tutoyer* the First Consul. He did so by many of them, by Junot to the last; it was only on ascending the throne that he ceased to address them in this familiar style in public. In the cordial intercourse of private friendship he continued to use the pronoun *thou*."—Duchesse d'Abrantes.

[This is the style throughout in Bonaparte's letters to Josephine; but, as the familiar *tutoying* would seem very strange in English, *you* has been substituted for thee and thou.

In the latter letters, however, the familiar style has been preserved in the translation, in order to show Bonaparte's attitude towards his wife—that his feelings had not changed.]

the interruption was explained by the tidings of his successful engagement at Elchingen. He writes from Augsburg: "I am quartered with the old Elector of Treves, who is very well housed. I have been on the move for a week. The campaign has opened auspiciously. I am very well, though it has rained nearly every day. Events have followed one another rapidly. I have sent to France 4,000 prisoners and eight flags, and have forty cannon, taken from the enemy. Adieu, my friend, I embrace thee."

After the surrender of Ulm: "I am in pretty good health, my good friend. . . . I have taken sixty or seventy thousand prisoners, more than ninety flags, and two hundred pieces of cannon. . . . Take good care of thyself. I am a little tired. The weather has been fair the three days past. The first columns of prisoners start to-day for France, six thousand men in each column."

Having taken her station as near the theater of events as Napoleon would allow her to be, at Strasburg, Josephine transmitted to her daughter and to Joseph Bonaparte the news received from her husband. She writes to Hortense, on the 22d of October: . . . "I have promised, my dear Hortense, to Prince Joseph, who has written me a charming letter, to send a courier with the first news received. M. de Thiars wrote me, by order of the Emperor, all the details of our recent successes, and I immediately transmitted them to Prince Joseph, with the request that he would send to thee

and to thy husband. To-day I received a letter from the Emperor, which I send to thee, feeling sure that it will give thee the same pleasure as it did me. Kindly preserve it and return to me when I see thee.

"All of the Emperor's staff are well; not a single general was wounded, which news you will give to all the ladies whose husbands are in the army. On Thursday they will chant a *Te Deum*, and the same day I shall give a fête to the ladies of Strasburg.

"Adieu, my dear Hortense, I love thee with all my heart and embrace thee. A thousand loving messages to thy husband and children."

Arrived at Munich, where the people received with joy their deliverer, Bonaparte took much-needed repose, and wrote more at length to his wife of the astonishing events of this miraculous campaign. Josephine renewed her entreaties for permission to rejoin him there, but the Emperor declined to allow her to risk the journey.

"I am very desirous to see thee," he wrote, "but cannot call thee hither until an armistice be concluded or we shall have gone into winter quarters. A thousand kisses, my dear friend."

It was impossible that she should join him, for the army was soon pressing on again; not long after she received a letter from the Austrian capital, six weeks only after he had quitted the Seine: . . . "I have been here two days, my good friend. I am somewhat fatigued. I have not yet seen the city by day; we entered in the night. To-morrow

I receive the notables. Nearly all my troops are beyond the Danube, in pursuit of the Russians.

"Adieu, my Josephine; the first moment I find it possible, I will have thee come to me. A thousand loving messages for thee."

In this simple language did the conqueror announce to his consort his occupation of the enemies' capital.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AUSTERLITZ TO WAGRAM.

MASTER of Austria, the Emperor was then able to accede to Josephine's repeated entreaties and allow her to approach somewhat nearer to the seat of war. The 16th November he wrote her to proceed to the capital of Bavaria, where she would find a beautiful palace at her disposal, and would meet with a good reception.

He promised to rejoin her there as soon as he should have completed his campaign against the Russians ; and, though so occupied with schemes of the greatest magnitude : with one hand fighting the enemies of his country and with the other governing the country of which he was the ruler, he yet found time to write her most minutely respecting her conduct and intercourse with the authorities. She was to remember that the Electrice of Bavaria was a daughter of the King of England, though apparently well disposed, etc.

" I shall be very glad to see thee, the moment my affairs will permit. I am about leaving for my advance guard. The weather is horrible ; it snows

continually ; for the rest, everything is going well. Adieu, my good friend.

"NAPOLEON."

Josephine did not forget that she was Empress of France, wife of the invincible Napoleon ; and at the Bavarian court she impressed every one with her gentle dignity of character as well as by her grace. Thus she followed after the victorious army, gathering up the fruits of battles, cementing the ties new formed and sealing to her and to her spouse the hearts of the vanquished and liberated.

While Josephine was performing this journey to Munich, occurred the greatest of Bonaparte's triumphs : the victory of Austerlitz.

Immediately after the battle, while yet the cries of the wounded arose from the smoking field of conflict, Napoleon wrote to his wife three letters, one after the other, which give sufficient testimony of his affectionate interest in her welfare.

The first :

"AUSTERLITZ, 3d December, 1805.

"I have sent to thee Lebrun, from the field of battle. I have beaten the Russian and Austrian armies commanded in person by the two Emperors. I am a little fatigued ; I have bivouacked a week in the open air ; to-night I sleep in the chateau of the Prince de Kaunitz. The Russian army is not only defeated, but destroyed. . . . I embrace thee."

"AUSTERLITZ, 5th December. . . .

"I have concluded a truce. . . . The battle of

Austerlitz is the greatest I have ever fought : forty-five flags, more than one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, the standards of the Russian guard, twenty generals, thirty thousand prisoners, more than twenty thousand killed : a horrible spectacle. The Emperor Alexander is in despair and has set out for Russia. I met the Emperor of Germany, yesterday, at my bivouac, and conversed with him for two hours ; we are agreed to make peace quickly. . . . I look forward with pleasure to the moment when I may join thee. Adieu, my good friend ; my health continues good, and I am very desirous to embrace thee."

"AUSTERLITZ, 7th December. . . .

"I have concluded an armistice ; within a week peace will be made. I desire to know if you have reached Munich, and in good health. . . . The Russians have lost immensely : more than twenty thousand killed and thirty thousand prisoners ; their army is reduced two-thirds ; their general-in-chief is killed. I have three thousand wounded and seven or eight hundred killed. I have a little trouble with my eyes, but it will soon pass. . . . Adieu, my friend, I greatly desire to see thee."

But Josephine was no more prompt in her replies to Napoleon's letters than during the campaign in Italy, and more than twenty days passed without news from her. The Emperor experienced anew the irritations of former times, and wrote her from Brunn, where he was detained while arranging the terms of the peace. . . .

"It is a long while since I have received news from thee. Have the fine fêtes of Baden, Stuttgart and Munich made thee forget the poor soldiers covered with mud, drenched with rain and blood? I soon leave for Vienna. We are working hard to accomplish the peace. The Russians have fled to their own country, well beaten and very humiliated. I should like above all things to be near thee. Adieu, my friend; my eyes are cured."

The silence of Josephine still continued, and he then addressed one more appeal, in a tone of solemn pleasantry.

"GREAT EMPRESS,—Not a single line from you since your departure from Strasburg. You have visited Baden, Stuttgart, and Munich, without having written me a word; that does not show much tenderness or affection. . . . Deign, from the height of your grandeur, to bestow a thought upon your slave. . . . NAPOLEON."

She certainly owed to him, who had raised her to this height of grandeur, more than this indifference, We cannot believe that she was sensible of his deep devotion, and it cannot be denied that she in a measure merited the fate that later followed her in the act of divorce. Less explicable is the patience of Napoleon with her continued frivolities, than his toleration of them.

Her excuse, given in a letter which he found awaiting him at Vienna was indisposition; yet she

solicited permission to join him in the Austrian capital.

"I have received thy letter," he promptly answered her, "and note with pain that thou art suffering; but it is not a good condition in which to make a long journey, at this season. I do not know what I shall do; it depends upon events. . . . Remain at Munich, amuse thyself: that is not difficult, surrounded as thou art by interesting persons and in such a beautiful country. I myself am very much occupied. In a few days I will decide. Adieu, my friend; a thousand loving and tender messages."

Soon after, on the 26th of December, the treaty of Presburg was signed, and the Emperor hastened to rejoin the Empress at Munich. Her joy at seeing her royal spouse returned safe from the wars was doubled by his assurance that he intended to solicit the hand of the Princess Augusta, daughter of the Elector of Bavaria, for her son, Eugène. Her own opinion of the Princess was expressed in a letter to Hortense, in which she describes her as of most charming character and beautiful as an angel. The wedding followed in due course, four days after Eugène's arrival from Italy, to which country the young Viceroy soon returned with his beautiful bride. The same day Bonaparte and the Empress started for Paris, where they arrived on the night of the 26th January, 1806.

Josephine had the pleasure to find there her uncle, the Chevalier, Baron de Tascher, recently arrived from Martinique, and whom she had not seen for

fifteen years. His sister, Mme. de Renaudin, and the Marquis de Beauharnais, whom she had married late in life, had both deceased during the Consulate. The only one of the old household remaining was the Countess Fanny de Beauharnais, who was passing her old age in the cultivation of the muses.

The Countess Fanny had a son, the Count Claude, whose daughter, Stéphanie, became the *protégé* of Josephine, who had her educated, and for whose future Napoleon provided, by marrying her to the Prince of Baden.

Stéphanie became the spoiled child of the Court; it is related that the sisters of Napoleon were offended at certain favors bestowed upon her, and especially because she was exempt from standing in their presence. She complained to Napoleon that they would not allow her to be seated, when he said to her: "Well, then, come sit on my knee; you will not incommode them there."

She objected to the manner of her marriage with the Prince of Baden, and for a long time treated him with disdain; but finally left the Court with him and was taken to the home he had provided for her. This was the second alliance Napoleon had contracted in behalf of the adopted relatives of his wife; that of the Viceroy and the Princess of Bavaria was perhaps the only one that had happy issuance.

The Baron de Tascher died suddenly, a month after the return of Josephine and Napoleon to Paris, surrounded by his children, whom he recommended to the attention of the Emperor.

The year 1806 witnessed two crowns upon the brows of Bonaparte's brothers : Louis, king of Holland, and Joseph, king of Naples. Dukedoms and principalities were parceled out to the members of his family and his Court, and the imperial authority strengthened by these parvenu princes and their retainers.

The confederation of the Rhine was formed, with Bonaparte as protector, in July, and the German empire was dissolved in August.

The departure of Queen Hortense, in June, was a subject of grief to Josephine, who felt for her daughter the liveliest sympathy, and in whose society she spent a great portion of her time.

For the unhappy issue of the marriage of Hortense with Louis Bonaparte Josephine must have felt somewhat responsible, and possibly remorseful. Both the Empress and the Emperor strove to heal the ever-widening breach between this ill-assorted couple.

Josephine's letters to her daughter are replete with tenderness and filled with solicitude :

"Since thy departure," she wrote a month later, "I have been quite ill with fever, but chiefly from chagrin at thy absence. How can I endure this separation from thee, from my daughter, so sweet, so tender and loving as thou, who art the charm of my life? My God ! I am so sad because I cannot see thee often. And thy health, my dear Hortense, is it good? If thou art ever sick, let me know at once, and I will hasten to the side of my best-

beloved. . . . Adieu, my dear Hortense, my darling daughter ; think often of thy mother, and persuade thyself that never was daughter loved as thou art."

Hortense had been united in marriage to Louis Bonaparte, on the 7th of January, 1802. Of this union, Bonaparte said at Saint Helena : speaking of Louis and Hortense : "They loved each other when they were married ; they desired to be united : the marriage was also the result of Josephine's intrigues, who found her account in it."

The Duchess d'Abrantes, who was intimate with her family, pays a well-meant tribute to her character : . . .

"In September '95, she was entrusted to the care of Madame Campan, formerly a lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette, who at that time kept a boarding-school in which were revived all the social and religious traditions of the old régime. . . . Among her companions were Stéphanie de Beauharnais, the future Grand Duchess of Baden ; Caroline Bonaparte, future queen of Naples ; Elisa Munroe, daughter of a future president of the United States. . . . She was light-hearted and happy.

"Bonaparte was as fond of her as though she were his own child. He used to say of her : 'Hortense makes me believe in virtue.'

"She was likely to fall in love with Duroc ; but was forced to marry Louis Bonaparte. The civil ceremony took place January 3, 1802, at the Tuileries, in the presence of the Bonaparte and Beauharnais families. Mass was not yet said in this palace, and

it was in the house in the Rue de la Victoire, where Josephine lived when she married Napoleon, that the marriage took place.

"A polished and well-conducted education had improved her natural talents; she drew excellently, sang harmoniously, and performed admirably in comedy.

"In 1800 she was a charming young girl; she afterwards became one of the most amiable princesses of Europe. I have seen many, both in their own courts and in Paris, but I have never known one who had any pretensions to equal talents. She was beloved by every one, though of all who surrounded her her mother seemed to be the least conscious of her attractions. . . . Her brother loved her tenderly; the First Consul looked upon her as his child; and it was only in that country, so fertile in the inventions of scandal, that so foolish an accusation could have been imagined as that any feeling less pure than paternal affection actuated his conduct towards her. The vile calumny met with the contempt it merited, and is now only remembered to be confuted.

"Hortense, in fact, while she was Mademoiselle Beauharnais, regarded Napoleon with respectful awe. She trembled when she spoke to him, and never dared to ask him a favor. When she had anything to solicit she applied to me; and if I experienced any difficulty in obtaining for her what I sought, I mentioned her as the person for whom I pleaded. 'The little simpleton,' Napoleon would

say, 'why does she not ask me herself; is the girl afraid of me?'"

A new coalition was formed, at the instigation of England, between Russia and Prussia, against France. With his usual promptitude, Napoleon hurled himself against the allied armies, and soon reduced them to the condition of the Russians and Austrians, the year before. He left Saint Cloud on the 25th September, and just a month later he was master of Germany, issuing his commands from its capital. After having installed the Empress at Mayence (for she insisted upon accompanying him to a point as near as possible to the seat of war), Napoleon, on the first of October, formally opened the campaign. A week later he wrote: . . . "My friend:—All my army is in motion. Everything is going well, and my health is perfect. A thousand kisses and good health."

On the 13th, in the night, and probably in the midst of those mighty combinations which resulted in the overthrow of the Prussian hosts the next day, at the battle of Jena, he wrote to Josephine: . . . "My good friend, everything is moving well, just as I had expected. With the aid of God, in a few days I will be able to assume a character likely to trouble the poor King of Prussia, whom I pity, as personally he is a good man. The Queen is at Erfurth with the King. If she wishes to witness a battle, she will surely have that dreadful pleasure. I am marvelously well, and have gained flesh, notwithstanding I have traveled at the rate of twenty

and twenty-five leagues a day, on horseback, in voiture, in every way possible. Ever thine."

It was the voice of the warrior, of the great captain, in the midst of war's alarms, rejoicing in his strength, performing prodigies of valor and confounding his enemies by his magnificent combinations.

Two days passed, and then, after the terrible battle, he writes to his Queen of the events of the dreadful day of Jena. . . .

"JENA, 15th October, three o'clock in the morning.

"My Friend . . . I have accomplished the grandest of achievements against the Prussians. I gained, yesterday, a great victory. There were 150,000 men ; I took 20,000 prisoners, 100 pieces of cannon and flags. I was at one time near the King, whom I just missed capturing, as well as the Queen. We have bivouacked for two days. I was never better. Adieu, my friend ; take care of thy health, and love me."

The delay in summoning her to join him, gave Josephine occasion to indulge in a fit of jealousy, and she doubtless accused her absent spouse of some indiscretion since he rejoined : . . . "I have received thy letter of the 27th of November, by which I see that thy little head is turned. I am reminded of this verse. . . . '*Désir de femme est un feu qui dévore*'. . . . Please calm thyself. I have already written thee that when winter quarters are established I will send for thee."

It having been found impossible to send for the Empress, Napoleon ordered her to return to Paris, and she reached the capital about the last of January, 1807. His letters of this month are loving and frequent, though it was at this time Napoleon met and fell in love with the beautiful Polish woman, the Countess Walewski, who, more than any other, affected his later life.

Josephine received intimations of this new infatuation of the Emperor, which her instinctive jealousy had foreseen, and was rendered extremely uneasy, without being able to combat her unseen foe.

The winter passed away and the summer; finally occurred the decisive battle of Friedland, when the Russians were totally defeated.

It was in January, 1807, that Napoleon met the woman he came nearest to loving after Josephine: the Countess Walewski, whom he first saw when in Poland. He was enamored of her at first sight, but she at first repulsed his advances, and only yielded upon the representation of her friends, and even of her relatives, that she should do so in the interests of Poland. Notwithstanding the harshness of her wooing, she became strongly attached to Bonaparte; when he returned to Paris she was established there, and bore him a son, on the fourth of May, 1810. In her own country she was regarded as a martyr, a victim for the good of Poland, and was not censured for her infidelity to her husband. She clung to Napoleon's fortunes to the last, visiting him at Elba, having in her company their little son.

But after his exile to Saint Helena she gave up all hope of meeting him again, and, her first husband being dead, married a certain Count d'Ornano ; but died in December, the same year, 1818.

This was undoubtedly the grand passion of Napoleon's later life, and his attachment for its object lasted the longest. It is a sad comment upon his character, that he was never more alive to the great worth of his wife than at this time ; at no time had he seemed so thoroughly attached to her.

Mme. de Rémusat confirms this story of the "Polish lady," and adds : "This extraordinary wooing did not, however, prevent the young lady from becoming attached to the Emperor, for their liaison was prolonged during several campaigns. . . . A son was born, who became the object of the hopes of Poland. . . . " etc.*

The ninth of February, immediately after the terrible battle of Eylau, Napoleon had written to his wife : . . . " My friend, a great battle took place yesterday ; victory rested with me, but I lost much ; the loss of the enemy, which is vastly more than

* Consult " Napoleon, Lover and Husband," for particulars of this strange affair.

" The Emperor and all the French officers paid their tribute of admiration to the charms of the fair Poles. There was one whose powerful fascinations made a deep impression on the Emperor's heart. He conceived an ardent affection for her, which she cordially returned. She received with pride the homage of a conquest which was the consummation of her happiness (?) It is needless to name her, when I observe that her attachment remained unshaken amidst every danger, and that at the period of Napoleon's reverses she continued his faithful friend.—*Memoirs of the Duke of Rovigo.*

ours, does not console me. I write these few lines with my own hand, though I am nearly dead with fatigue, in order to tell thee that I am well, and that I love thee. . . . It was a horrible battle; the country is covered with the dead; my soul is sick at the sight of so many victims. . . . Do not grieve, I pray thee, all will be finished soon, and in the happiness of seeing thee I shall forget all my fatigues."

The Russians were beaten, but not defeated, and Bonaparte would not leave the field until he had forced a definitive peace. Meanwhile, at Paris, Josephine had, by his orders, carried out her part in the imperial programme by entertaining at the Tuileries a gay and distinguished company. Hearing that the Empress had visited some of the ateliers and museums without much ceremony, and in a style not comportable to her rank, he wrote her a letter of reproach, in which, for the first time, he makes use of the word *you*, instead of the *thou*, which was his custom in familiar intercourse. This lapse from his accustomed tone of tenderness was very afflicting to Josephine, who complained of it, and he redoubled his attentions in the letters following: "I have received," said he, "thy letter of the 5th of April, in which I see with pain that thou art vexed at something I have said. . . . Thy little Creole head is turned, thou art afflicted! Well, we will say no more about it. . . Thou must not think of coming hither, that is impossible. . . . There are many things I would prefer to war, but duty must be held above everything else. . . . All my life I

have sacrificed : tranquillity, interest, happiness, to my destiny."

His destiny ; it was ever this implacable "destiny," which resounded in the ears of Josephine, foreboding the fate that was to be hers !

He was then deep in his amour with the Countess Walewski, but at this time he wrote to Josephine in a style that reminds one of those letters from Italy, many years before, when he was in the first throes of his passion. Perhaps she was vicariously receiving a love that another was usurping ? It did not deceive her ; but it was accepted as a harbinger of a better understanding. . . . "I have received thy letter. I do not know who are the objects of your suspicions. I love only my little Josephine, so good, pouting, capricious, who can quarrel with such grace, even as she does everything ; because she is always amiable, except when she is jealous : then she becomes a little devil."

But these imaginary evils, conjured up by the jealousy of Josephine, were to give place to real grief, and were swallowed up in the tide of sorrow that swelled the heart of the Empress-mother, in the month of May. For this month, the tidings came that the Prince-royal of Holland, the young Napoleon, son of Hortense and Louis Bonaparte, had died of croup.

This promising child, aged but five years, the eldest son of the King and Queen of Holland, was looked upon by Napoleon as the future heir to the throne of France, in default of children by Joseph-

ine ; and his unexpected demise was the severest blow that could have been given to her hopes of continuance in power as the consort of Napoleon. He had received the name of his august uncle, was his pet and the object of his thoughts, and was greatly beloved by both the Emperor and the Empress.

Immediately upon receipt of the distressing news, Josephine felt a strong inclination to be near her daughter and at once set out to seek her. On the way, however, she reflected that the Emperor would not sanction her leaving France, during his absence, and so she halted within the frontier, and addressed a touching letter to her daughter, imploring her presence. . . . "I have just arrived at the château of Lecken, near Brussels, my dear daughter, and here I await you. Come at once to restore me to life ; thy presence is necessary to my existence, and thou shouldst also wish to see thy mother and mingle thy tears with hers. I would continue further, but fear the Emperor would not approve my leaving the territory of France during his absence. But having come thus far I will await thee here. Adieu, my dear daughter ; I am overcome with fatigue, but above all with grief."

It was several days before the Queen of Holland could accede to her mother's request and join her, and meanwhile Bonaparte had received the sad intelligence that deprived him of hope for an heir in the line of descent through Hortense and his brother Louis.

It was a severe blow to his plans for the Napo-

leonic succession ; but he rallied from this, as he recovered from every severe misfortune that overtook him ; he wrote to Josephine no less than five consolatory letters, advising her to forget her private griefs in the exigencies of the occasion. . . .

. . . "I can understand thy grief at the death of the poor Napoleon ; I wish I could be near to thee to assuage thy sorrow. Thou hast had the good fortune to have been exempt from the loss of thy children ; but it is a condition attached to our miserable existence. . . . I hope to learn that thou hast been rational and art well. Wouldst thou willingly add to my distress ?"

Hortense arrived at the château on the 16th of May, where she found the consolation that only a mother can give. Her grief had petrified her, she was suffering in that stony silence that forebodes the worst ; but upon being received within her mother's arms, and hearing the expressions of tenderness with which she was received, she burst into tears and her surcharged heart found relief. She threw herself sobbing upon her mother's breast, and the crisis was passed which, the physician had declared, might have terminated her existence.

The Empress took her sorrowing daughter to Paris, where she strove to divert her from her grief. But she fell into a stupor of melancholy from which it was impossible to rescue her. At this stage, the Emperor wrote her most affectionately to rally from her sorrow and remember that she still owed something to her surviving children and to her family.

"My Daughter," wrote Napoleon, from Dantzic, on the second of June, "you have not written me a single word, in your great sorrow. . . . What they tell me, that you love nobody, that you are indifferent to all, I am constrained to believe from your silence.

"This is not well, Hortense, this is not what you promised. Your son is with you still. Your mother and myself: are we nothing to you? Adieu, my daughter. Try to be cheerful; it is necessary to be resigned. . . . My wife is very much distressed at your condition; do not add to her grief. Your affectionate father,

"Napoleon."

In the death of the young Napoleon a terrible blow had fallen upon them all; the last hope of the Napoleonic succession seemed to have perished with him.*

*"The situation of the Bonaparte family did not favor the establishment of the principle of hereditary succession. Napoleon was married to a woman who could have no children; his eldest brother, Joseph, had no sons; his brothers, Lucien and Jerome, had contracted marriages which were in his eyes misalliances which could not be pardoned. Louis only was left to perpetuate the Imperial race, and he through insane jealousy refused connivance. His son, Napoleon Charles, born 1802, Oct. 10th, was looked upon as the likely successor until his death put an end to all hopes, 5th May, 1807. An important effect upon the fortunes of Josephine. Jerome was not quite twenty when he married Miss Patterson. The law of 20th Sept., 1792, declared null and void a marriage contracted by a person less than twenty years old, without the consent of both parents. It was in Feb., 1805, that Madame Letitia placed in the hands of a notary a protest against her son's marriage."

CHAPTER XXV.

PORTENTS OF DISASTER.

No one was more keenly conscious of her loss of prestige than Josephine herself. Having lost, by the death of her grandson, the only prop that supported her feeble claim to the throne, and unable to furnish Napoleon the heir he so ardently desired, she now felt that the question of divorce was merely a matter of time.

While in this state of anxiety tidings arrived of the victory of Friedland, announced to Josephine by a letter from her husband : . . .

"My Friend,—I can write thee but a word, because I am so fatigued. . . . My children have worthily celebrated the anniversary of Marengo. The battle of Friedland will also be celebrated, and redound to the glory of my people. The entire Russian army has been routed : 80 pieces of cannon taken ; 30,000 men captured or killed ; 25 generals killed, wounded or taken ; the Russian guard destroyed : This is a worthy sister of Marengo, of Austerlitz, of Jena. The bulletin will give thee the rest. . . . Adieu, my friend, I go to mount my horse.

"Napoleon."

Hortense had been ordered by her physicians to the Pyrenees, for the benefit of the waters there, and thither Josephine despatched an account of the meeting of the two Emperors, of France and Russia, on the raft in the Nieman.

"I am receiving frequently, my dear Hortense, news from the Emperor. He speaks often of the Emperor Alexander, with whom he is well pleased. He has sent to me two gentlemen who witnessed the late events, and they tell me that the first interview was a magnificent spectacle. The Emperor was the first to arrive at the pavilion constructed in the middle of the river; the two armies were upon the right and the left bank, respectively. . . . They say that at the moment the two Emperors embraced the air was rent with the acclamations of both armies. That which interests me most is that I shall soon see the Emperor. . . . Keep me in thy thoughts, and believe, my dear daughter, in the continued solicitude of thy mother."

At the treaty of Tilsit, Napoleon may be said to have been at the apogee of his glory and power. Notwithstanding the great events in which he was engaged, which indeed he was shaping, Napoleon did not neglect to write to Josephine frequently. On the same day the treaty was signed, in fact, he despatched a tender epistle to his wife. . . .

"July 7th, 1807,—My friend; the Queen of Prussia dined with me yesterday. . . . She is very amiable. . . . When you shall have read this letter the

peace with Prussia and Russia will have been already concluded, and Jerome recognized as King of Westphalia, with 3,000,000 subjects. This news for thee alone. . . . Adieu, my friend, I love thee, and wish to know that thou art happy."

Three weeks later Bonaparte was in Paris, welcomed by the transports of his loving people. One may imagine the joy of the Empress, after this long and sorrowful separation of ten months.

Her doubts were set at rest, even though her husband was still filled with thoughts of his high destiny. *Destiny*, a word he had written more than once.

But there was no change in his affections ; he still regarded her with tenderness, still surrounded her with every attention ; her jealous sentiments were lulled to rest, she lapsed into a feeling of security.

After his return from Tilsit the Emperor devoted all his time to the internal affairs of France, and especially to the reorganization of his court.

Since the fall of the monarchy, some five or six different governments had succeeded ; but neither the horrors of the Revolution nor the rapid march of events during the Consulate and Directory, had effaced from the memory of the people all recollection of the ancient splendors and prestige of the royal court. All the vast energies of the Emperor were now directed to a revival of those courtly customs and usages, by which monarchical institu-

tions are preserved and entrenched in the regard of the people.

The throne once firmly established, a natural consequence of this restoration was the return to the traditional splendor and brilliant appanage considered necessary to a maintenance of the supreme power. Although the newly-risen court of Napoleon was ridiculed, and even held up to detestation by the *ancienne noblesse*, yet there were few who did not hasten to be included in its reorganization. All-powerful by the greatness of his character, feared on account of his numerous victories, and with a profound understanding of the springs of human motives, Napoleon did not doubt that his court would become firmly established in the respect of his people and honored by the presence of the foreign ambassadors.

Since the establishment of the Consulate, in fact, he had not ceased to gather about him whatever would add to the brilliancy and effect of his surroundings.

We have seen the gradual accretions to his little court, from the modest beginnings at the Luxembourg, through the quasi-imperial receptions at the Tuileries and Saint-Cloud, and during the three years just concluded. The first was the formative period, and the second and accomplished achievement terminated at the end of 1807, or at the culmination of his career of glory.

We may, rather, say that the first full period continued five years, and may be called the reign of

Josephine; the following, or the reign of Maria Louisa, from the year 1810 until his fall.

The period of ascendency was during the reign of Josephine. To her was given the glorious task of restoring to France the usages and traditional manners of royalty. To her tact, her ability, her feminine power of pleasing and reconciling the many incongruous elements of the new court, was due the successful re-establishment of the imperial régime.

It required all the genius of Napoleon and all the wonderful tact and address of his accomplished consort, to unite the old nobility with the parvenu aristocracy created by Bonaparte.

His most cherished idea was the fusion of these two elements so opposite in character; the one founded upon claim of ancient ancestry, the other based upon glorious achievements. That it was accomplished, should redound to the credit of the great man who did it, of the one who thus laid the foundation for the reconciliation of the opposite classes in dismembered France.

Through the medium of his court, Napoleon bridged the chasm which had so long separated the new France from the old; hands that had been raised against each other in battle, were now clasped in amity. The result was soon seen in the amelioration of manners, in the extinguishment of hates and the fusion of parties.

There was no longer any pretext for the return of the Bourbons; for the flower of their aristocracy

might be found attached to the Court of Napoleon, the glitter and pomp of which were sufficient to satisfy the most exacting Royalist.

Independently of the great offices filled by Fesch, Berthier, Duroc, Talleyrand, Caulaincourt and Ségur, there were appointed twenty court chamberlains, comprising some of the greatest names in the Empire; after these came the prefects of the palace, three in number; an almoner, two equerries, and pages to the number of forty.

The household of the Empress was composed of the first almoner, a lady of honor, mistress of the robes, and numerous ladies of the palace (*dames du palais*), wives of Napoleon's marshals, and some of the old nobility. . . . "Madame Bonaparte," says Mme. de Rémusat, one of these same ladies-in-waiting, "had her head turned for a time by finding real *grandes dames* among her ladies-in-waiting."

An establishment was also created for the mother of Bonaparte, the "*Impératrice-Mére*," who was likewise surrounded by aristocratic ladies, both of the old régime and modern creation.

Regarding the jealousies and the heart-burnings of these *grandes dames* subjected to attendance upon the "parvenu emperor" and his wife, sisters, and mother, we shall be silent; several of them have given their plaints to the world: as Mme. de Rémusat and the Duchess d'Abrantes, in whose interesting narratives much of value may be discovered.

After two months' absence from her daughter,

Josephine visited her at her retreat, finding her composed and in good health. The husband of Hortense left her with the Empress and returned to Holland ; but the Queen did not dare accompany him, fearing the effect of the climate, which she believed had caused the death of her eldest son.

At the beginning of September, 1807, the court was transported to Fontainebleau, where numerous fêtes were given and diplomatic receptions held on a grand scale. . . . One of the fêtes was given in honor of the marriage of the new king of Westphalia, Jerome Bonaparte, with the Princess Catherine of Wurtemburg. This marriage, which, like that of the Prince Eugène with the Princess of Bavaria, was one of policy, promoted by the ambition of Napoleon, was in the end a happy one ; and neither had occasion to regret the event.

It was while at Fontainebleau that Josephine received the first intimation that her divorce was anything more than a carefully-guarded, secret thought of the Emperor, in the proposition from the wily Fouché, minister of police, that she should sacrifice herself to the glory of France and the best interests of Bonaparte's family. She was amazed, and at first thought this man but an agent of Napoleon's, sent to prepare her for the inevitable change.

It was true, as he urged, that she had given her husband no heir to the throne ; that there was no prospect favorable to such an event ; that Napoleon's heart was filled with the desire to transmit his throne and his glory to a successor of his own

blood ; and that his highest ambition would only be gratified by the consummation of his desires in this regard.

It was soon shown that the officious minister had acted without the sanction, even without the knowledge, of his chief ; that he had wished to sound the public opinion upon the subject of divorce and to prepare France for such an event ; and that he had promulgated the idea of an alliance of Napoleon with the Grand-duchess, Catherine of Russia. He well knew the repugnance of the Emperor to the idea of divorce, and his love for one who had ever been devoted to his best interests. But he conceived the project of forcing his hand, and libeled both parties to this projected separation, by speaking of it as an eventuality likely to occur.

The Empress, prostrated by this covert attack, had replied that there was no sacrifice she would not make for her husband or for the good of France, but gave way to her grief ; and one day, finding her in tears, Napoleon demanded the cause.

She told him ; he was furious, and at once commanded the culpable Fouché to come before him, threatened to deprive him of his position, and his resentment was only calmed by the interposition of his brothers and Murat.

Fouché had treated his Empress with characterestic ingratitude ; but the result of his machinations was only to cement more firmly the friendship between the royal pair ; not then, at least, was the act of separation to be announced.



Little Church at Trois Ilets.

Her happiness now reassured, Josephine was about to send to her aged mother a last and most pressing invitation to join her, when she received the afflicting intelligence of her demise.*

Thus did joy and sadness alternate in her life; even the briefest interval of happiness soon gave place to grief.

The etiquette of the Court forbade her to put on the habiliments of mourning, but she wept in secret for this devoted mother, the last link that united place her to the place of her birth.

By the orders of Bonaparte, a letter was forwarded to the high officials of Martinique, conveying his thanks for their attentions to Madame de La-Pagerie in her last moments and for their respect to her memory. He also ordered that a piece of marble should be suitably engraved and placed above or near her tomb, to indicate the last resting-place of the mother of the Empress Josephine and mother-in-law of Bonaparte, Emperor of France.

* Josephine's last letter to her mother.

"PARIS 17th February, 1807.

"MY DEAR MAMMA.

"I embrace the opportunity afforded by the departure of M. Duquesne to send you a letter and to greet you. My health is good. I returned hither from Mayence the first of the month. The Emperor is well. I received a letter from him, dated the 1st February, when he was some forty leagues the other side Varsovia, the Russians retreating before him.

"I had my daughter with me during my stay at Mayence; but she returned to the Hague, to be with the King.

"I expect that soon Eugène will present me with a little grandson, as the Princess Augusta is about to be confined, and I am in daily

At the end of November Bonaparte departed for Italy, refusing the entreaties of Josephine to be allowed to accompany him thither; but making amends for his refusal by bestowing upon her son, the Viceroy, the title of successor to the crown of Italy.

This was a tardy sanction of his act of nearly two years before, upon the occasion of Eugene's marriage; but none the less gratifying to the young Prince and his mother.

Napoleon returned to Paris in January, 1808, and commenced at the Tuileries those fêtes, balls, and receptions that gave such an impulse to trade and air of gayety to the capital. Towards the end of the month another marriage was celebrated: that of the young and beautiful niece of the Empress, Mlle. de Tascher, with one of the princes of the Rhine Confederation.

Scarcely had the attendant fêtes been consummated, when the trouble began over the succession to the Spanish throne, and Bonaparte hastened with

expectation of news of the event. . . . I will attend to the matter of which you wrote me in your last letters. . . . I am only too glad to be useful to our colony and to persons in whom you are interested. Adieu, my dear mamma; be very careful of your health, which I hope still continues good. This hope only compensates me for not seeing you. Think of me sometimes, and be assured that no one loves you more tenderly than your daughter. . . .

"JOSEPHINE."

This letter could not have reached its intended recipient very long in advance of her demise, which occurred in June, the same year. It will be seen that to the last Josephine kept her mother in view, was solicitous as to her welfare, and desirous that she should come to her in France.

his wife to the Spanish frontier. On this journey Josephine was of incalculable assistance to Napoleon, by her unwearied attendance at fêtes and receptions, her tact and adroitness, her pleasing manners. There was no indication of the intentions of Bonaparte in this matter of divorce, though it is possible he had already decided upon its necessity. At Bordeaux, Josephine received intelligence of the birth of a third son to Hortense and Louis, and on the 23d April wrote her an affectionate letter of congratulation. Two days after another, in which she assures her daughter of Napoleon's satisfaction that she has become the mother of another boy, instead of a daughter.

Both the Empress and the Emperor entertained, without doubt, the liveliest hopes that this son might eventually become the hope of the empire. The obstinacy of Louis, in refusing to his brother any voice in his future, was the death of their expectations.

They returned to Paris in August, both with saddened spirits; for Bonaparte had received intelligence of the defeat of his troops in Spain; and Josephine already felt gnawing at her heart that presentiment of disaster that attended all the operations of Bonaparte in the Spanish peninsula.

The Emperor believed his presence necessary to the safety of his army in Spain, to avenge this first check to his military fortune; but he first attended the conference at Erfurth, where he met the Emperor Alexander and the German sovereigns.

He wrote to Josephine that he was very much in love with Alexander, and if he were a woman he would surely seek his hand in marriage. This pleasantry was far from agreeable to Josephine, because she had good reason to believe that the Russian Emperor was desirous to enter into more intimate relations with Bonaparte, through a matrimonial alliance. In fact, rumor had it that he had offered Napoleon the hand of his sister, the Princess Anne, and that the Emperor had not returned a positive answer.

On his return from Erfurth the Emperor passed a few days in Paris, and then hastened towards Spain, where his presence was most urgently needed. Josephine was filled with apprehension at the outcome of the Spanish wars, and allowed the Emperor to leave her only after her most earnest protest against its continuance. The war in Spain, as history has told us, was the beginning of Bonaparte's downward career. But for Spain, there would not have ensued the Austrian and Russian complications; in placing his brother upon the throne of Spain and seeking to maintain him there by the power of bayonets, Bonaparte divided his army, distracted his people, brought down upon himself the vengeance of England, of Portugal, and of Spain.

Napoleon's letters to his wife are at first filled with the news of continued successes; one of them will suffice, to show the manner of his correspondence, at the opening of the year in which she was driven from the throne of France.

"3d January, 1809,—I have received, my friend, thy letters of the 18th and 21st December. I am pursuing the English, sword in hand. The weather is cold and rigorous, but everything is going well. Adieu, my friend. Always thine. A very happy new year to my Josephine."

"9th January,—Moustache brings me a letter from thee of the 31st. I see, my friend, that thou art in a most melancholy state. Do not fear, Austria will not declare war against me. If she does, I have 150,000 men in Germany and as many more on the Rhine, and 400,000 Germans at call. Russia will not turn against me. The Parisians are crazy, credulous. Everything is going on well. I shall return to Paris just as soon as I think it necessary. . . . I charge you to be careful what you reveal. . . . But adieu, my friend. My health is good, and I am ever thine." . . .

Josephine's fears were soon realized and Bonaparte had cause to thank her for her extraordinary prevision. For Austria, though repeatedly beaten, yet never conquered, profiting by the absence of Bonaparte in Spain, took occasion to declare war against her powerful enemy. The Emperor's decision was not more rapid than his movements, and, seeing at once his mistake, he abandoned his Spanish operations and returned to Paris with all speed.

The 23d of January, he was again in the Tuileries ; two months sufficed him to put in operation all the vast enginery of war at his command. Austria soon had cause to repent her hasty decision,

and to lament her mistake. On the 13th of April Bonaparte left Paris, taking the Empress with him as far as Strasburg, where she had sojourned during the Russian campaign, four years previously.

Four days later Bonaparte had established his headquarters, and two days after commenced that short campaign which resulted in making him master, for the second time, of the capital of Austria.

Some twenty-five letters, written by Napoleon to his wife, during this campaign, are in existence; but it is only necessary to quote from a few of them, to show their character. They become shorter and more concise, the farther negotiations proceed with the Court of Austria, and have their value as indications of the writer's feelings at the time.

In his letter of the 6th of May, alluding to the report that he had been wounded in the heel, he writes: . . . "My friend, I have received thy letter. The ball touched me but did not wound, only just grazing the tendon Achilles. My health is good; thou art wrong to disquiet thyself. My affairs are in good shape. Ever thine."

It is well known that Bonaparte was several times wounded (as shown by the scars discovered on his body after his death, at St. Helena), but that he bravely concealed his wounds, fearing the effect they would have upon his soldiers, who believed him invulnerable.

The capture of Vienna he announced in a few lines, as though it were a foregone conclusion and a matter of course. But the arrival of Prince

Eugène, with his victorious army, which he knew would be welcome to the mother-heart of Josephine, he described more at length, and bestowed praise upon his adopted son that he was aware would be gratefully received. This letter he sent by special courier, and enclosed a proclamation which he requested her to have translated into French and German, announcing his victories, and have printed for general distribution.

On the loss of his gallant marshal, the intrepid Lannes, he wrote briefly : . . . " The death of the Duke of Montebello, who was killed this morning, distresses me deeply. If thou canst console his poor wife, please do so. Truly thine."

Of the victory which Eugène, profiting by the teachings of his adopted father and beloved mentor, had gained over the second Austrian army, Napoleon wrote to Josephine : . . .

" I have sent thee a courier to announce that, on the 14th, the anniversary of the battle of Marengo, Eugène won a great victory over the Archduke John, taking 3,000 prisoners, several cannon, and four flags."

Three weeks later the campaign was ended by the decisive battle of Wagram, and which Bonaparte announced to his wife in the same laconic manner as at Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland : . . .

" 7th July, five o'clock in the morning,—I have sent you a courier with the good news of the victories of Ebersdorf and Wagram, which latter I gained yesterday. The enemy's army is in

disorderly flight. Eugène is well. . . . My losses are considerable, but the victory is decisive and complete. We have taken more than one hundred cannon, twelve flags, and many prisoners. . . . Adieu, my friend ; I embrace thee. Many loving messages for Hortense."

On the 13th July, an armistice was concluded, and negotiations entered upon for a peace between the two empires that should be more permanent than any that had preceded.

While the negotiations for peace were proceeding, and which consumed several months, Napoleon resided at Vienna and at Schönbrunn, and Josephine, having returned from Strasburg, retired to Malmaison, where she gave herself up to the same gloomy forebodings that had agitated her four years before.

It was not solely an amour that gave rise to sad reflections now, but a concatenation of events that all pointed to but one solution of the problem of succession to the throne in case of accident to its present possessor.

The recent narrow escape from death of her royal spouse ; a more recent attempt at assassination ; the necessity for some apparent heir to the throne being in evidence :—even the people were seriously debating the probable consequences, should Napoleon fall by a bullet from the enemy or beneath the poignard of the assassin. Wild rumors were in the air, and both Bonaparte and Josephine were cognizant of them and their import.

Napoleon coolly discussed the probabilities in every event, and calculated the possible advantages resulting from alliance with one of the royal families. If he should be deprived of life, at this time, it was certain that his dynasty would perish with him ; not one of his brothers could assume and maintain the royal state ; there was no rallying-point for the people of France,—in short, no direct and legitimate heir to the throne.

It was at this time, while negotiating the peace of Schönbrunn, that the idea of divorce became fixed and Napoleon decided upon a matrimonial alliance, either with the royal house of Austria, or Russia, both of which had been practically offered him. The treaty of peace was signed on the 14th October ; on the 21st the Emperor addressed a note of three lines to Josephine : . . . "My friend,—I leave in an hour. I shall arrive at Fontainebleau on the 26th or 27th ; meet me there with the ladies of the Court."

The peace was signed, divorce was decided upon ; Napoleon returned to France, with the plaudits of his people ringing in his ears ; but with the determination to deprive himself of the music of a voice sweeter to him than the acclamations of the multitude.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DIVORCE.

EVENTS did not march more rapidly than Napoleon himself. He so hastened his journey, that he arrived at Fontainebleau on the 26th of October, early in the morning, before Josephine and her ladies had even departed from Saint Cloud.

A messenger was despatched to apprise her of his arrival, and she hastened to meet him ; but his anger was such that at first he avoided her, and for a time was cold and indifferent. "And so you are come, madame," he curtly said. "It is time. I was about setting out for Saint Cloud."

Josephine burst into tears, when Napoleon's heart relented, and he begged her to forget his rudeness. They were friends again, but between them was a constraint that had never been before.

A cloud sat upon his brow ; she frequently lapsed into tears ; they avoided that intimate companionship which had hitherto been such solace and recreation.

He had returned triumphant but gloomy, for he had come to the unalterable determination to sever the tie that united them, even though well aware

that it would break this fond heart which had been devoted to him during the past thirteen years.

It was his destiny—thus he reasoned—which compelled this separation from one who loved him as a man, and not as sovereign; who had shared with him the glory of his achievements, who had been the crowning charm of his life.

It was not new to Josephine: this apparition of divorce; during several years of her marriage it had shadowed her existence, had presented itself before her in every variety of form.

It had been urged upon Bonaparte by his family, whose jealousy of Josephine was intense and ill-concealed, their antipathy extending even to her children.

It was urged by them on the return from Egypt, at the beginning of the Consulate for life, preceding the Coronation, and after the peace of Tilsit; but Napoleon had nobly protected his wife.

Since, however, the death of the Prince-royal of Holland, or for the two years past, he had entertained the suggestion that previously had been indignantly repelled.

The advances of Russia at Erfurth had made a vivid impression upon his *amour-propre*, and may have given him the assurance that no alliance was too lofty for him to aspire to.

His narrow escape from death, in the last campaign, must have brought vividly before him the futility of all his plans, the unstability of his carefully-builded throne, if he should die without a legit-

imate successor ; the matrimonial prospects, which it is more than probable were suggested at the signing of the peace of Vienna ; and the certitude that he could never expect an heir from his present union, which another more fortunate might give him ;—all these circumstances united to impress upon him the necessity for divorce, as due to his high destiny and the repose of France.

But the Emperor feared to excite anew the grief and fears of Josephine, and he dreaded to meet her reproaches and her tears. He could not bear to see her suffer, he was pained at sight of her tears ; this man, before whom all Europe was even then in humble obeisance shrank from communicating to her the decision at which he had arrived.*

* It was while Napoleon was at Fontainebleau, before his return to Paris, that Josephine for the first time heard the divorce mentioned, ; the idea had occurred to the Emperor's mind while he was at Schönbrunn. . . . Napoleon often reflected on the best mode of making this communication to the Empress ; still, he was reluctant to speak to her. . . . He was apprehensive of the consequences of her susceptibility of feeling ; his heart was never proof against the shedding of tears. He thought, however, that a favorable opportunity offered for breaking the subject previously to his quitting Fontainebleau. He hinted at it in a few words which he had addressed to the Empress, but he did not explain himself until the arrival of the Viceroy, whom he had ordered to join him. . . . He was the first person who spoke openly to his mother and obtained her consent for that bitter sacrifice. He acted on that occasion like a kind son and a man grateful to his benefactor and devoted to his service, by sparing him the necessity of unpleasant explanations towards a partner whose removal was a sacrifice as painful to him as it was affecting. The Emperor, having arranged whatever related to the future condition of the Empress, upon whom he made a liberal settlement, urged the

But this suspense could not long endure. One day, the last of November, after a gloomy repast, at which neither spoke, the sword so long suspended above her head fell, and severed the tie that for so many years had held these two together.

Instinctively apprehending what was to follow, Josephine followed her husband into his cabinet. His look was stern, and her heart quailed before it. But approaching her, he said, with accents of tenderness, "Josephine, my dear Josephine, you know how much I have loved you; that to you, to you alone, I owe the little happiness I have experienced in this world. But, Josephine, my destiny is more powerful than my will; my dearest affections must yield to the interests of France——"

"Say no more," faltered the victim of his ambition; "say no more; I have expected this; I

moment of the dissolution of the marriage, no doubt because he felt grieved at the condition of the Empress herself, who dined every day and passed her evenings in the presence of persons who were witnessing her descent from the throne. There existed between him and the Empress Josephine no other bond than a civil act, according to the custom which prevailed at the time of his marriage. Now, the law had foreseen the dissolution of such marriage contracts. A particular day having therefore been fixed upon, the Emperor brought together into his apartments those persons whose ministry was required in this case: . . . The Emperor then declared in a loud voice his intention of annulling the marriage he had contracted with Josephine, who was present; the Empress also made the same declaration, which was interrupted by her repeated sobs. The Prince Arch-Chancellor having caused the article of the law to be read, he applied it to the case before him, and declared the marriage to be dissolved."—Mem. of the Duc de Rovigo.

understand, I can appreciate your motives,—but, the stroke is not the less mortal."

She fell to the floor insensible, and the Emperor, alarmed, called the chamberlain of the palace, and the court physician, who bore the Empress to her apartments. Three hours she lay unconscious, and during that time no anxiety was greater than Bonaparte's, who doubtless felt as keenly as she the fatal thrust that had divided their hitherto united lives.

Hortense was then at Fontainebleau, and gave to her mother the consolation which she so much needed ; one loving heart, at least, was hers to rest upon.

Recovered from this first shock, Josephine was no longer the gay and joyous companion of the Emperor, animating by her presence the gloomiest of his melancholy days. She was subdued, grief-stricken, passing whole nights in tears ; yet, in the company of her ladies and at the fêtes that succeeded in honor of Napoleon's victories, she conducted herself with dignity and apparent cheerfulness.

Hortense was with her when the blow descended ; Eugéne was summoned from Italy to give the *coup-de-grace.*

Both Hortense and Eugéne hastened to assure their stepfather that they would thenceforth renounce all claim upon his bounty ; that they could not leave their mother's side ; that wherever she should be sent, thither they would accompany her. Napoleon, who loved these children as his own, and earnestly desired their well-being, dissuaded them

from any step that should lead to separation from his fortunes, and patiently explained to them his reasons, the imperative necessity, for divorce.

Josephine also added her supplications to her husband's, and her children acquiesced in her desires.

Once more Josephine was to be submitted to the torture of acquiescence in an act that deprived her of imperial favors.

The day for the official promulgation of the act of divorce was fixed for the 15th of December, on which there were assembled, at the Tuileries, the Empress, Madame-mère, the king and queen of Holland, the king and queen of Westphalia, the king and queen of Naples, the Prince viceroy, the Princess Pauline, the arch-chancellor, Cambecérès, and the secretary of state.

Josephine was pale and trembling, her children calm, but only suppressing their emotions for their mother's sake.

Napoleon, standing, his hand holding that of the Empress—those hands so soon to be separated forever—addressed the arch-chancellor, in a voice full of dignity and tenderness, but betraying at times the emotion he would have concealed. . . .

After alluding to the circumstances calling together such a distinguished assemblage of witnesses, Napoleon said:

"The political interests of my monarchy, and the desires of my people, which have constantly guided all my actions, require that I should leave behind me, to heirs of my love for my people, the throne

upon which Providence has placed me. Meanwhile, for many years, I have given up all hopes of children by my marriage with my well-beloved spouse, the Empress Josephine ; and this it is which induces me to sacrifice the sweetest affections of my heart, to consider only the good of my subjects, and desire a dissolution of our marriage.

" Arrived now at the age of forty years, I may reasonably indulge a hope of living long enough to rear and guide the children with which it may please Providence to bless me. God knows what such a resolution has cost my heart ; but there is no sacrifice, however great, which I would not make, if it be proved to be for the best interests of France.

" It is my duty to add that, far from having any cause for complaint ; on the contrary, I have nothing but praise for the tenderness and devoted attachment of my well-beloved wife. She has enriched thirteen years of my life ; their remembrance will be forever engraved on my heart. She was crowned by my hand ; she shall always retain the rank and title of Empress ; but, above all, it is my desire that she shall never doubt my feelings towards her, nor regard me as other than her best and dearest friend."

He cast upon his companion a look of tender regard, and when he made mention of those happy years they had passed together (too late he acknowledged they were the happiest of his life), his eyes filled with tears and his voice failed him, as he closed his remarks.

Josephine's sweet voice was then heard in response, in accents that lingered in Napoleon's memory long years after, when an exile on the rock of Saint Helena, giving her assent to the act that deprived her of the highest honor earth could bestow.

She declared her willingness to submit to the will of her spouse and the desires of the people, and to give this proof of her attachment and devotion in the greatest sacrifice that could be asked. Her voice failed, and then, after in vain attempting to continue, she handed the paper to the secretary of state, who read it for her, in a voice trembling with emotion. . . . "I owe everything to his bounty; it is his hand that crowned me, that raised me to the height of the throne. . . . I respond to all the sentiments of the Emperor, in consenting to the dissolution of a marriage which henceforth is an obstacle to the happiness of France, by depriving it of the blessing of being one day governed by the descendants of that great man, so evidently raised up by Providence to efface the evils of a terrible revolution and restore the altar, the throne, and social order. But the dissolution of my marriage will in no respect change the sentiments of my heart; the Emperor will ever find in me his best and truest friend. I know how much this act, commanded by policy and such exalted interests, has cost his heart; but we both glory in the sacrifices which we make to the good of our country."

Later in the day the decree of the senate, which

proclaimed the act of marriage dissolved, was signed by the Emperor and Empress, and then Josephine was taken to her apartments, faint with emotion, there to weep in secret over her unhappy fate.

The Emperor returned to his cabinet, silent and sad, where he for a long time sat in gloomy reflection, his head supported upon his hand.

The next morning, while the carriages were in waiting to convey the Emperer to the Petit Trianon, whither he had decided to retreat for rest and reflection, he seized his hat and said to his secretary, Meneval, "Come with me."

He led the way by the secret passage from his cabinet to the apartment of the Empress. He opened the door; she was there, alone, and in tears. At sight of the Emperor she arose and cast herself upon his breast, sobbing as if her heart would break. For a few minutes the unhappy couple stood there, locked in loving embrace, then Bonaparte summoned her attendants, delivered her into their charge, hastily withdrew, entered his carriage, and was whirled away.

Hortense and Eugène soon after entered the apartment, and finally succeeded in calming the agitation of the Empress, who was obliged to prepare for the final farewells.

For the last time, many of those who had known her at the height of her power, came to bid her adieu, and to solicit the honor of sharing her court at Malmaison. She was affected to tears at this demonstration of affection, but attended to her

duties with dignity, and in the afternoon, accompanied by her son and her daughter, set out for Malmaison, bidding an eternal farewell to the scenes of all her glory at the Tuileries.

For the crown she had lost she felt not the slightest regret; for the spouse who had bestowed it her heart was breaking.

"But if he finds happiness thereby," she said, "I shall never regret the sacrifice I have made."

The concluding act of this great sacrifice was performed in the senate, where high tribute was paid to the Empress. Before the senators assembled, Eugène declared the sentiments that had actuated him and his sister in giving their adhesion to the cause of Napoleon. "My mother, my sister, and myself," he said, "owe everything to the Emperor. He has been to us always a loving father; he will find in us devoted children and submissive subjects. . . . When my mother was crowned, in the eyes of the nation, and at the hands of her august spouse, she tacitly contracted the obligation to sacrifice her own affections and interests to the interests of France. She has complied, with courage, with nobility, and with dignity. . . . She will view, with feelings of pride and satisfaction, whatever may redound to the happiness of her country and the Emperor."

In an eloquent harangue, the Count Lacépède declared that posterity would ever associate the name of Josephine with the immortal deeds of Napoleon. The senate decreed:

I. The marriage contract between the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Josephine is dissolved.

II. The Empress Josephine shall retain the title and rank of Empress-Queen Crowned.

III. Her allowance is fixed at an annual payment of two million francs, out of the public treasury.

IV. Whatever provisions the Emperor shall make in favor of the Empress Josephine, out of the funds of the civil list, shall be obligatory upon his successors.

The decree of the senate was transmitted to the Emperor and Empress by special messenger, and also two addresses. In the address to the Empress, the senators reaffirmed their appreciation of the sacrifice Josephine had made for France, declaring that history would keep it in eternal remembrance. The people of France had for years revered her many virtues; they would ever admire the sublime devotion of this last act of hers, which had sealed their love and their respect.

This was the last public communication received by Josephine from the State; but it was a convincing testimonial of the regard in which she was held by all; a flattering tribute to her character; the capstone to the monument raised by her exemplary life.

To the gift of the senate, was added by Napoleon the extensive property of Malmaison, the château of Navarre, and another million from the civil list; she was also privileged to reside, when in Paris, at the Palace of the Elysée; thus had the Emperor fulfilled his promise to bestow upon her the magnifi-

cence that pertained to the high rank to which he had raised her.

The royal pair had separated, but not yet could they remain apart ; on the very next morning after the removal to Malmaison, Bonaparte sought out his wife, still weeping over her irreparable loss. Together they walked the alleys of Malmaison, together talked of the pleasures now forever past ; they were still friends ; no more than that : no longer man and wife, —as Napoleon delicately conveyed to her, at meeting and parting, when he took her hand, pressed it, but without embracing her.

On his return to Trianon, that same evening, he addressed her a letter for her encouragement, full of the tenderness of the happiest days of their union. "My friend," it began, "I found thee to-day weaker than thou shouldst have been. Thou shouldst show more courage . . . and above all care for thy health, which is so precious to me. . . . Thou canst not doubt my constant and sincere friendship. . . . Adieu, my friend ; sleep well ; dream of me. NAPOLEON."

Every day during the month that followed the divorce, the Empress received a letter or a visit from Bonaparte. The courtiers, seeing her still in receipt of imperial favors, and taking their cue from their royal master, thronged the courts of Malmaison as of yore. Some, however, came out of regard for their former queen and beloved mistress ; but these were comparatively few, and Josephine was rendered rather sad than happy by their presence.

The Queen Hortense has published some twenty-three letters, written by Napoleon to Josephine during the three months intervening between the divorce and his second marriage. They are all of like tender and affectionate nature, and betray the real feelings of the Emperor, clearly showing that the divorce was, as he claimed, demanded by policy, and not by sentiment.

"I have received thy letter, my friend. Savary tells me that he found thee in tears; that is bad; it makes me sad. . . . Sleep well. . . . I was very lonely (he wrote after returning to the Tuileries), this great palace is so vast and vacant; I am sad, not seeing thee."

The visits to Malmaison were intermitted, and Josephine sadly complained. He wrote: "I wish very much to go to Malmaison, but be calm; the page told me this morning that thou wert in tears. I dine all alone. Adieu, my friend; do not ever doubt my feelings towards thee."

But, notwithstanding all these amicable assurances, the report was spread abroad that it was Napoleon's intention to banish his wife far from France. This came to the ears of Josephine, and she demanded of Bonaparte that she be allowed to reside a while in the Elysée; considering that his consent would be equivalent to a refutation of the charges. This consent he not only freely gave, but sent thither such articles as she had left at the Tuileries, including the magnificent toilet-service of gold, presented to her by the city of Paris; and

taking the liveliest interest in fitting up the rooms for her occupation. Her fears were quieted, she saw much more of her friend, during the last of February and the first half of March, and in consequence became more tranquil and resigned.

Possessed of her own means for ascertaining the movements of the Court, Josephine soon became aware of the negotiations which were in progress for the hand of Marie Louise. Whether it was that she did not wish to witness the arrival of her successor to the throne and heart of Napoleon, or that it was in obedience to a request of the Emperor, Josephine applied for leave to retire to her country-seat, the castle of Navarre. This was granted, and to that beautiful but isolated spot she made her retreat, with the members of her little court, a few days before the marriage of Bonaparte with the Austrian Archduchess.

With the second marriage of Napoleon terminates the life of Josephine as connected with the great man who had showered such favors upon the companion of his glorious reign.

After thirteen years of intimate companionship, after having testified in a thousand ways to the regard and love he had felt for the woman of his first choice, Napoleon had wedded another : young, sweet, naïve, who was no more in love with him than was Josephine during the campaign of Italy.

Napoleon's absorption during the imperial honeymoon, his tender regard for his bride, all the details of this event, so distressing to Josephine, were

promptly reported at Navarre, where they were commented upon and doubtless exaggerated, to the wounding of her sensitive heart.

She had courageously renounced her place by his side upon the throne, she had abandoned forever her claims upon him as her spouse; but she was wounded afresh at the thought of forgetfulness on his part. Her regard for him was unchanged, she had accepted his marriage as but a proof of his integrity of intention; she had schooled herself to reconcile it with the scheme for securing an heir to the throne. But she had not renounced all claim to his friendship, and when the days passed without an answer to the letter she had written, a few days before leaving Malmaison, she became alarmed.

Arrived at Navarre and finding the château scarcely habitable, she had written to Napoleon for means wherewith to make the indispensable repairs; in default, for permission to return to Malmaison. No reply being made, as the Emperor was then engrossed in this new and absorbing passion for Marie Louise, Josephine's fears grew in proportion to the continued silence, and she augured from it a prospective exile, not only from Paris, but from her beloved France, as well. She pressed her son to obtain audience of the Emperor, and ascertain if she might return to Malmaison, regarding his reply as the touchstone of his intentions respecting her exile. His reply, according to her all she desired, set her fears at rest, and assuaged her grief.

This negotiation led to the passage of the three

letters following, between Josephine and Napoleon, which are the last we shall submit of their long-continued correspondence; and which present more clearly than anything else their situation and respective sentiments during this first year of their divorce.

The first written by Josephine in acknowledgment of his favor, and laboriously prepared, doubtless after consultation with the ladies of her court. affects the official form, which until then had never been used by either, but which she may have considered as demanded by her novel position and the silence of the Emperor.

"NAVARRE, 19th April, 1810.

"SIRE. . . . I have received by the hand of my son the assurance that Your Majesty consents to my return to Malmaison, and grants the advances necessary to complete the repairs of the château of Navarre. This double favor, sire, dissipates in great part the uneasiness and fears which the silence of Your Majesty had inspired. I had feared I was entirely banished from your remembrance; I now see that I am not, and am to-day less unhappy—even happier than I had thought it possible to be.

"I shall leave at the end of the month for Malmaison, since Your Majesty has no objection. . . . My intention is to reside there a very short time; then to go away for the waters. But, while I am at Malmaison, Your Majesty may be assured that I shall live as if I were a thousand leagues distant from Paris. . . .

"I shall not cease to pray for Your Majesty's happiness. JOSEPHINE."

The Emperor's reply. . . .

"COMPIEGNE, 21st April, 1810.

"MY FRIEND: I have received the letter of the nineteenth; permit me to say it is in very bad style. I am always the same; my likes never change. I do not know what Eugène may have said to thee, but I did not write, because thou shouldst have known that I would approve whatever would be agreeable to thee.

"I see with pleasure that thou art going to Malmaison, and that thou art pleased; as for me I shall be happy to receive news from thee and to send thee mine. I say no more, only ask that thou wilt compare this letter with thine, and after that I leave to thee to declare which is the most friendly, thine or mine. Adieu, my friend; take the best care of thyself, and try to judge impartially.

"NAPOLEON."

With what happiness Josephine received this tender epistle may be seen by her response, in which her overflowing heart expressed itself. . . .

"A thousand thousand thanks for not having forgotten me. My son brought me thy letter. With what ardor I devoured its contents! . . . There was not a word that did not make me weep; but these tears were tears of joy, and sweet. . . .

"I shall be in despair, lest my letter of the nineteenth shall have displeased thee. I cannot recall exactly my expressions, but I remember the painful

sentiments that dictated it; my chagrin at not having heard from thee. But I knew the reasons for thy silence and I feared to trouble thee with a letter. Thine has been a balm for my hurt. Mayest thou be happy, and receive all thou meritest; my whole heart wishes it. . . . Adieu, my friend; I thank thee tenderly, as I shall ever love thee.

"JOSEPHINE."

Comment upon these letters is unnecessary, nay, superfluous, for they show the existing relations between these two, their mutual affection, the nature of the tie that bound them together, and which naught but death could separate.

Josephine returned to Malmaison in the first part of May, while the Emperor and his wife were absent on a visit to the departments of the north.

During his journey Napoleon wrote her briefly: . . "I desire to see thee very much. If thou art at Malmaison at the end of the month, I shall call. . . . Do not doubt my regard for thee."

The Emperor kept his word, but made the visit in secret, out of regard for his new wife, who was beginning to experience a feeling of jealousy at the frequent communications of her husband with his discarded spouse.

In a letter to her daughter, Josephine recounted this visit, which was on the twelfth of June. . . . "I had yesterday a very happy day, for the Emperor came to see me. . . . During the time he is here I seem to have the courage to withhold my tears, but

as soon as he is gone they *will* burst forth, and I am very unhappy.

"He was as good and agreeable as usual, and I only hope that he saw in my heart all the tenderness and devotion with which it is filled for him."

Josephine soon sought the waters of Aix, where she was informed of the abdication of the King of Holland, and where her daughter, the Queen, soon after joined her, with her two sons.

During this absence of Josephine from France, the Emperor, as though desirous of honoring her family through her relatives, consummated the marriage of the young aide-de-camp, Louis de Tascher, with the Princess Amelia, whose father was a member of the Rhine Confederation. This union, which became a very happy one, had a sad beginning, in the death of the Princess's mother, from injuries received at the Austrian Ambassador's ball, in July. She survived but a few days, but before her death expressed her satisfaction at the approaching marriage of her daughter with the cousin-german of the Empress Josephine.

But these attentions, and the affection manifested by Napoleon for his fomer wife, aroused the jealousy of Marie Louise, who, whatever her charms of person and character, had not the lofty, self-sacrificing disposition and amiable characteristics of Josephine.

She could not understand the nature of their friendship, and doubted the evidence that assumed a friendship without love, a strong affection with-

out compromising attentions, on the one side or the other.

Notwithstanding the care taken by the Emperor to conceal his visits to Malmaison from the knowledge of the Empress, she became aware of them and he was compelled to submit to her reproaches. In order to calm her, the Emperor ceased his visits and discontinued his correspondence; then there were complaints from the borders of Lake Geneva, where the first wife had established herself for the season.

Soon after, Bourrienne, writing of this period, says: "I repaired to Malmaison; I was ushered into the tent drawing-room, where I found Josephine and Hortense. When I entered Josephine stretched out her hand to me saying, 'Ah, my friend.' These words she pronounced with deep emotion, and tears prevented her from continuing. . . . Josephine confirmed what Duroc had told me respecting the two apartments at Fontainebleau; then, coming to the period when Bonaparte had declared to her the necessity of a separation, she said: . . . 'On the 30th of November we were dining together as usual, I had not uttered a word during that sad dinner, and he had broken silence only to ask one of the servants what o'clock it was. As soon as Bonaparte had taken his coffee, he dismissed all the attendants, and I remained alone with him. I saw in the expression of his countenance what was passing in his mind, and knew that my hour was come. He stepped up to me—he was trembling, and I shuddered; he took my hand, pressed it to his heart,

and after gazing at me for a few moments in silence he uttered these fatal words : " Josephine, my dear Josephine, you know how I have loved you To you, to you alone, I owe the only moments of happiness I have tasted in this world. But, Josephine, my destiny is not to be controlled by my will. My dearest affections must yield to the interests of France."

" ' " Say no more," I exclaimed, " I understand you ; I expected this, but the blow is not the less mortal." I could not say another word ; I know not what happened after, I seemed to lose my reason ; I became insensible, and when I recovered I found myself in my chamber. Bonaparte came to see me in the evening ; and, oh, Bourrienne, how can I describe to you what I felt at the sight of him ; even the interest he evinced for me seemed an additional cruelty. . . . Alas . . . I had good reason to fear ever becoming an Empress.'

" I knew not what consolation to offer to Josephine ; and knowing as I did the natural lightness of her character, I should have been surprised to find her grief so acute, after the lapse of a year, had I not been aware that there are certain chords which, when struck, do not speedily cease to vibrate in the heart of a woman. Though more than a twelvemonth had elapsed since the divorce, grief still preyed on the heart of Josephine. ' You cannot conceive, my friend,' she often said to me, ' all the torments that I have suffered since that fatal day. I cannot imagine how I survived it. And the first

time he came to visit me after his marriage—what a meeting was that! . . . How many tears I shed! The days on which he comes are to me days of misery, for he spares me not. How cruel to speak of his expected heir. Bourrienne, you cannot conceive how heart-rending all this is to me. Better, far better, to be exiled a thousand leagues from hence. However, a few friends still remain faithful in my changed fortune, and that is now the only thing which affords me even temporary consolation.'

"The truth is, that she was extremely unhappy, and the most acceptable consolation her friends could offer was to weep with her. Yet, such was Josephine's passion for dress, that after having wept for a quarter of an hour she would dry her tears to give audience to milliners and dressmakers.

"One day I remember that, taking advantage of the momentary serenity occasioned by an ample display of sparkling gewgaws, I congratulated her upon the happy influence they exercised over her spirits when she said: 'My dear friend, I ought, indeed, to be indifferent to all this; but it is a habit.' Josephine might have added that it was also an occupation, for it would be no exaggeration to say that if the time she wasted in tears and at her toilet had been subtracted from her short life, its duration would have been considerably shortened."

And the Duchesse d'Abrantes, at Malmaison—"Upon this the Empress drew closer to me—she was already very near—and, taking both my hands, said, in a tone of grief which is still present to my

mind after an interval of four-and-twenty years: 'Madame Junot, I entreat you to tell me all you have heard relating to me. I ask it as a special favor—you know that they all desire to ruin me, my Hortense, and my Eugène.'

"She spoke with the greatest anxiety: her lips trembled, and her hands were damp and cold. 'Madame Junot,' she said, 'remember what I say to you this day: remember that this separation will be my death, and it is they who will have killed me. . . . Yet God is my witness that I love him more than my life, and much more than that throne, that crown, which he has given me.' The Empress may have appeared more beautiful, but never more attractive, than at that moment. If Napoleon had seen her then, surely he could never have divorced her. Ah, in summing up the misfortunes of this fatal year, that divorce must be added to render them complete.

"I went again to Malmaison a few days afterwards with my little Josephine, whom her god-mother had desired me to bring; this time, as I was alone with her, she did not scruple to open all the sorrows of her heart, and she spoke of her grief with an energy of truth quite distressing. She regretted all she had lost; but it is justice to say that far above all she regretted the Emperor. The attentions of her children in those days of suffering were admirable.

"The letters which I received from my friends in Paris naturally made mention of the new Empress. The most varied opinions were pronounced upon

her ; Cardinal Maury sent me a letter in which he said : 'I will not attempt to describe how much the Emperor is attached to our charming Empress. This time he may be said to be really in love ; more truly in love than he ever was with Josephine ; for, after all, he never saw her while she was very young. She was upward of thirty when they were married. But Marie Louise is as young and as blooming as spring. You will be enchanted with her when you see her ' "

In 1812, she writes :—" I observed that Josephine had grown very stout since the time of my departure for Spain. This change was at once for the better and the worse. It imparted a more youthful appearance to her face ; but her slender and elegant figure, which had been one of her principal attractions, had entirely disappeared. Still, however, she looked uncommonly well, and she wore a dress which became her admirably. Her exquisite and judicious taste in these matters contributed to make her appear young much longer than she otherwise would. . . . The best proof that can be adduced of the admirable taste of Josephine is the marked absence of elegance displayed by Marie Louise, though both Empresses employed the same milliners and dressmakers, and Marie Louise had a large sum allotted for the expenses of her toilet."

CHAPTER XXVII.

NAVARRE AND MALMAISON.

THE Empress could not banish the specter of exile, and she wrote her daughter, after she had returned to Paris, to ascertain the Emperor's intentions beyond peradventure. Three weeks passed without news from Hortense—three months, they seemed to Josephine—who wrote to the Queen, from Berne : . . . "Not one word from thee during the twenty days of our separation. What can be the cause of thy silence? I confess that I am lost in conjecture and do not know what to think. . . . If I do not hear from thee in three days, . . . I shall return to Malmaison ; there, at least, I shall be in France ; and if everybody abandons me I will live alone, serene in the consciousness of having sacrificed my own happiness for the good of others."

This letter was needless, for on the following day came one from Hortense that put an end to all her fears, for it informed her that the Emperor left her entirely free to do as she pleased : to remain in Switzerland, to go to Italy, or to return to Navarre or even to Malmaison. Soon after he wrote her by his own hand, confirming all that had been trans-

mitted through the Queen. While he advised her to make the journey to Italy, as a distraction, and to see her son, yet he left her at perfect liberty; counseling her, however, if she wished to return to France, to take up her residence at Navarre, in preference to Malmaison. Upon the reception of this favor, the Empress at once decided to establish herself at Navarre, and in this beautiful chateau she resided for nearly a year, not even visiting her beloved Paris during that period. Here she received the intelligence of the birth of an heir to the throne, (20th March, 1811), in a letter from Napoleon himself. One of her ladies wrote of this event: —

"We dared not question the Empress, but observing our curiosity she had the condescension to gratify us with a sight of the letter, which consisted of ten or twelve lines, traced on one page, and was, as usual, covered with blots. I do not exactly remember the commencement, but the conclusion was, word for word,—'This infant, in concert with *our Eugène*, will constitute our happiness, and that of France.' 'Is it possible,' remarked the Empress, 'for one to be more amiable, or could anything be better calculated to soothe whatever might be painful in my thoughts at this moment, did I not so sincerely love the Emperor. This uniting of my son with his own is indeed worthy of him, who when he wills, is the most delightful of men. This it is which has so much moved me.'

"She presented the messenger with a diamond brooch valued at 5,000 francs, and arranged a

splendid fête in honor of the birth of the King of Rome."

After some months at Navarre, Josephine left that chateau and established herself at Malmaison, where she was surrounded with a brilliant court, little differing in its details from that of her rival at the Tuileries. This court was that of a veritable sovereign, yet with less of etiquette than that at the palace; greater liberty in its members and more of real pleasure in the great affairs of life. The Empress here abandoned herself to the indulgence of her tastes for natural history, botany, and the arts. She revived the fortunate days of the First Consulate and having at her command three millions of revenue (which she never imagined could be diminished), she indulged her inclinations for charity and benevolence to the full.

She launched into a course of extravagance that soon plunged her anew into debt, and some time after drew down upon her a well-merited reproof from Napoleon, whose methodical tastes, even in the matter of large expenditures, were outraged at her recklessness.

He advised her to conduct her affairs with more economy; to put aside half of the 3,000,000 he allowed her, for the future; she would then have, in ten years, a reserve of some 10,000,000, with which she could endow her grandchildren, when they married.

Instead of that, reports constantly reached him that she was again in debt. What should he think of her: in debt, with three millions of revenue?

The Empress deserved this reproof; indeed, it is wonderful, the patience shown towards her follies by her former spouse. But, although she used to receive his scoldings with indifference, at least with only a gush of tears, this letter produced such an effect upon her that she took to her bed, overcome with chagrin. Information of this having been conveyed to Napoleon, he hastened to send her, by a special messenger, a proof of his continued affection, in this, the last, letter contained in the published memoirs of Queen Hortense.

"Friday, eight o'clock in the morning, 1813.

"I send to know the state of thy health, for Hortense tells me that yesterday thou wert all day in bed. I am vexed with thee on account of thy debts; I did not expect thee to spend all thy income; on the contrary, I had thought thou wouldst put aside at least a million each year, for thy grandchildren, when they married.

"Nevertheless, do not doubt my friendship for thee, and do not be vexed on account of what I wrote. Adieu, my friend; let me know that thou art better. They tell me that thou art getting as fat as a Normandy farmer's wife.

"NAPOLEON."

As early as the year 1800, we have convincing proof of Josephine's senseless extravagance, as shown in this excerpt from Bourrienne. . . .

"Bonaparte said to me: 'Talleyrand has been

speaking to me about the debts of my wife. I have the money from Hamburg,—ask her the exact amount of her debts; let her confess all. I wish to finish, and not begin again. But do not pay without showing me the bills of those rascals: they are a gang of robbers.'

"The next morning I saw Josephine. She was at first delighted with her husband's intentions; but this feeling did not last long. When I asked her for the exact amount of what she owed she entreated me not to press it, but content myself with what she should confess.

"She said: 'I can never tell all, it is impossible. Do me the service to keep secret what I say to you. I owe, I believe, about 1,200,000 francs, but I wish to confess to only 600,000; I will contract no more debts, and will pay the rest, little by little, out of my savings. I said to her: 'Madame, I cannot deceive you respecting the disposition of the First Consul. He believes that you owe a considerable sum, and is willing to discharge it. You will, I doubt not, have to endure some bitter reproaches and a violent scene; but the scene will be just the same for the whole as for a part. . . . As I do not believe he estimates your debts at so high a sum as 600,000 francs I can warrant that you will not experience more displeasure for acknowledging to the whole than to the half; and by doing so you will get rid of them forever.'

"'I can never do it, Bourrienne; I know him; I can never support his violence.'

"At last I was obliged to yield to her earnest solicitation, and promise to mention only the 600,000 francs to the First Consul.

"His anger and ill-humor may be imagined. He strongly suspected that his wife was dissembling in some respect, but he said: 'Well, take 600,000 francs, but liquidate the debt for that sum, and let me hear nothing more on the subject. I authorize you to threaten these tradesmen with paying nothing, if they do not reduce their enormous charges. They ought to be taught not to be so ready in giving her credit.' Madame Bonaparte gave me all her bills. The extent to which the articles had been overcharged was inconceivable. I observed in the milliner's bill alone thirty-eight new hats, of great price, in one month. There was likewise a charge of 1,800 francs for heron plumes, and 800 francs for perfumes. I asked Josephine whether she wore out two hats in one day? She objected to this charge, which she called a mistake. . . . I availed myself fully of the First Consul's permission, and spared neither reproaches nor menaces. I am ashamed to say that the greater part of the tradesmen were contented with the half of what they demanded. One of them received 35,000 francs for a bill of 80,000; and he had the impudence to tell me that he had made a good profit, nevertheless. Finally I was fortunate enough after the most vehement disputes, to settle everything for 600,000 francs. Madame Bonaparte, however, soon fell into the same excesses; but fortunately money became more plentiful.

"This inconceivable mania for spending money was almost the sole cause of her unhappiness. Her thoughtless profusion occasioned permanent disorder in her household until the period of Bonaparte's second marriage, when I am informed she became regular in her expenditure."

Says Bonaparte's second secretary, Meneval, . . . "She had a mania for having herself painted, and gave her portraits to whoever wished for one. . . . The tradesmen never ceased bringing her diamonds, jewels, shawls, and trinkets of all kinds ; she bought everything, without ever asking the price ; and generally forgot what she had purchased. . . . After the divorce, her income, large as it was, was insufficient ; but the Emperor was more compassionate then, and when sending the Comte Mollien to settle her affairs gave him strict orders *not to make her weep*. . . . The amiable Josephine had not less ambition in small things than her husband had in great. She felt pleasure in acquiring, but not in possessing. . . . My intercourse with Josephine was delightful, for I never saw a woman who so constantly entered society with such an equable disposition, or so much of the spirit of kindness, which is the first principle of amiability."

Again, Bourrienne, in the year 1805. "Bonaparte said to me : 'Bourrienne, you must, before I proceed to Italy, do me a service. Go to my wife ; endeavor once more to make her sensible of her mad extravagance. Every day I discover new instances of it, and it distresses me. When I speak to her on

the subject I am vexed ; I get angry—she weeps. I forgive her, I pay her bills,—she makes fair promises ; but the same thing occurs over and over again. If she had only borne me a child. It is the torment of my life not to have had a child. I plainly perceive that my power will never be firmly established until I have one. If I die without an heir, not one of my brothers is capable of supplying my place. All is begun, but nothing is ended. God knows what will happen. Go and see Josephine ; and, do not forget my injunctions.' . . . I acquainted the Empress with all that the Emperor had said to me. I reminded her of the affair of the 1,200,000 francs, which we had settled with half that sum. I even dropped some allusion to the promises she had made. 'How can I help it,' said she. 'Is it my fault?' Josephine uttered these words in a tone of sincerity which was at once affecting and ludicrous. . . . 'All sorts of beautiful things are brought to me ; they are praised up ; I buy them—I am not asked for the money—and all of a sudden, when I have no money, they come upon me with demands for payment. This reaches Napoleon's ears and he gets angry. When I have money, Bourrienne, you know how I employ it. I give it principally to the unfortunate, and to the poor emigrants. But I will try to be more economical in the future. Tell him so if you see him again. But is it not my duty to bestow as much in charity as I can?' . . . "

It was in vain that her errors of extravagance were pointed out ; Josephine never reformed in this

respect, and to the last was a spendthrift of the hard-earned money given her by the people of France. She entirely changed the aspect of the château of Navarre, and was continually expending large sums in the embellishment of Malmaison. She had a model sheep-farm and introduced rare varieties of merinos; a dairy, in charge of Swiss, whom she had brought with her, who lived in a pretty châlet and were clad in their national costume. The gallery, the green-house, the botanic garden, the menagerie: all these received her unwearied attention, and consumed her millions. She was in almost daily consultation with M. Lenoir, on art; Redouté, the flower-painter; Isabey, her designer; and M. Aimé Bonpland, the great botanist, celebrated for his voyages in company with Humboldt.* Malmaison did not lack for company and distinguished guests; among them Cambacérès, as well as the courtiers of the Tuileries; for, since the birth of the king of Rome, Marie Louise had lost her jealous fears, and Napoleon frequently inquired of his friends as to news from Josephine. Quick to take this hint, the obsequious courtiers thronged the

* Malmaison: Fontaine, 1800: "Madame Bonaparte is much distressed at our making some straight paths; she wants everything done in the English fashion. . . . Our heresy in regard to the present fashion of gardens has much injured us in her estimation. . . . To speak about order and regularity in a garden was sheer blasphemy. . . . She is ordering some new decorations, and wants us to give our attention to the gardens, the waters, the hot-houses, in short, to everything which can make this place more agreeable; for she regards it as her own private property."

courts of Malmaison, and swelled the lists of visitors.

But there was one room rarely exposed to the gaze of the vulgar and frivolous : that last occupied by Bonaparte when there. Everything remained just as he had left it : A volume of history, with leaf turned down and a pen beside it ; a map of the world, upon which he used to trace his marches across the enemy's country ; his camp-bed, his arms, his apparel hung upon the wall ; all in fact that could remind the forsaken wife of him who had been so much to her, and whose loss she so bitterly deplored.

It is well known that Napoleon often visited Josephine in her retirement at Malmaison ; of one of these visits she says : " He threw himself with transports into my arms ; it seemed impossible to cease gazing upon me, and his look was that of the most tender affection. ' My dear Josephine, I have always loved you ; I love you still.' ' I endeavored to efface you from my heart,' said I, ' and you again present yourself. All my efforts are useless ; to love you, and to die,—that is my fate.' "

Madame de Rémusat says of Josephine at this time, that she never opened a book, she never took up a pen, and never touched a needle ; and yet, she never seemed in the least bored. This is very evidently a malicious slander ; for we have seen that Josephine often used the pen, and freely wrote to her family ; her reading was done by the ladies, her *lectrices*, paid for that purpose.

Malmaison itself is a monument to the taste and genius of Josephine, who made it the beautiful re-

treat that it was. France is indebted to her for many new plants, for many ideas in landscape and floral effects, introduced at this very place, Malmaison.

After the death of Josephine the estate passed through several hands, finally becoming the property of the Spanish Queen, Christina, who resided here some seventeen years, and who kept the buildings in repair and preserved the place somewhat as it was in the time of its original owner. In 1867, Napoleon III. secured possession of Malmaison and, with the co-operation of Eugénie, refurnished the rooms with articles that had belonged to Josephine, his grandmother. During the exposition of that year many visitors came here to pay their tribute of affection to Josephine. But, three years later, during the Prussian invasion, the barbarous soldiers committed many atrocities, defaced the walls and furniture, destroyed paintings, and left the once-beautiful Malmaison in ruin and neglect.

To-day, though dismantled and forlorn, Malmaison is still in evidence: one may stroll through its deserted chambers, be told the spot where Josephine breathed her last; view the dining-room where she so often graced the hospitable board, and be shown the place where occurred the last parting between Hortense and Napoleon.

Next to her birthplace, where her happiest years were passed, the lover of Josephine will hold Malmaison, where Josephine found rest and recreation, where she imprinted her image upon its walls and gardens; where she sorrowed out her declining years.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ELBA AND FONTAINEBLEAU.

JOSEPHINE had, it is true, accepted her fate, but she lived in the remembrance of happier days, and ever cherished the objects of her tenderness and her regrets. She desired to see the King of Rome, and at last, to gratify her, Napoleon arranged an interview at Bagatelle in the Bois de Bologne. At sight of him she could not restrain her tears, and embraced him with all the ardor of a mother long denied access to her offspring. "Ah, my dear child," she murmured, while raining kisses upon his face, "thou wilt some time know, perhaps, all thou hast cost me."

The Emperor hastened to end this affecting scene, which was a trial to his patience, and took the little king away. This was their last interview; he soon departed on the Russian campaign; already were in motion the events that preceded his last fling at fate, that ended in the final catastrophe.

We will not recount the horrors of the Russian campaign; nor the terrible retreat, which began at the ruins of burning Moscow, and finally ended before the walls of Paris, soon to be in the possession of the enemy. This account belongs to the history

of Napoleon ; but incidentally Josephine is involved in the final overthrow,—in the disasters that overtook her country, which crushed the man to whom she was united till death, and in the revolution that hurled him from the supreme power ; for these hastened the close of her own life.

We know the honorable part taken by her son, the ever-faithful Eugène, in the last retreat : that he bravely performed his duty, and in the face of overwhelming obstacles, extricated the remnant of his army and brought it safe to Italy ; that he recovered, and first took the field, at Bonaparte's call to arms ; that he won an important victory over the Austrians, and was held by Napoleon worthy to succeed him as his heir.

One of the last letters written by Josephine was to her son, bidding him hasten to rejoin Napoleon.

Bonaparte, in the month of February, 1814, seeing France invested on every side, at first resolved to call to his aid Eugène and his army. He wrote to this effect to Josephine, who at once sent to her son a patriotic appeal for his assistance : . . .

MALMAISON, 9th Feburary, 1814.

" Do not lose an instant, my dear Eugène, whatever may be the obstacles, to comply with the Emperor's orders. He has written me on this subject. . . . France above all, France has need of all her children. . . . Come, then, my dear son, hasten, never could thy zeal so well serve the Emperor as now. Every moment is precious. . . .

"Adieu, my dear Eugène, I have only time to embrace thee and to repeat: come as quickly as possible.

"JOSEPHINE."

But the repeated successes of both Eugène and Bonaparte caused the latter to send a counter-order, by the hands of Eugène's aide-de-camp, the Count de Tascher, who had come to announce the victory of the Mincio. Eugène was directed to defend the soil of Italy, foot by foot, to retire, only when compelled, beyond the Alps, and to retain his title as long as possible to the throne of Italy.

Bonaparte had proposed at the council of Chatillon to renounce the crown of Italy in favor of his designated heir, the Prince Eugène Napoleon, and to his descendants in perpetuity.

The struggle again began between the armies of all Europe united against the single army of France, each day rendered more feeble by its very successes.

But, notwithstanding the prodigies of valor performed by the French under the direction of the great captain, whose clairvoyant genius recalled the best days of the Italian campaign, the allied troops continued to advance upon Paris. The 25th of March, in fact, the Emperor of Austria announced his manifesto, in which he declared to the French that the sovereignty of him who had espoused his own daughter was inimical to the peace of Europe and incompatible with the best interests of France.

The Empress Josephine had decided not to leave

Malmaison until the last moment, for there she was in direct communication with Paris, where her daughter and many friends resided, and whence she could derive the latest intelligence from the Emperor, concerning whose movements she manifested the liveliest anxiety.

We have, unfortunately, no letters of this critical period that will throw light upon the sentiments of Napoleon and Josephine ; their correspondence was doubtless intermitted by the pressure of affairs. As for Queen Hortense, she was continually passing between Paris and Malmaison, carrying comfort and cheer to her anxious mother, keeping in touch with the court at the Tuileries, gleaning scant news from Marie Louise, who had been appointed regent during the absence of Bonaparte, and from his brother Joseph who was at the head of the government.

By the last of March the allied army was close upon Paris, and the inhabitants, notwithstanding their confidence in Bonaparte, were in a tumult. Many believed, with Hortense, that the Emperor would appear in season to effect their deliverance. She herself hastened to the Tuileries to entreat the Empress-regent not to leave Paris at the mercy of their foes ; but too late ; that very afternoon, at an extraordinary council, composed of the regent, the brothers of Napoleon and the ministers of the Empire, it was decided that the defense of the capital was impracticable, and that Marie Louise, the young King of Rome, and the heads of government, should

retire to Blois. This was in conformity to the orders of Napoleon, before his departure, who feared for the safety of his wife and son, should they fall into the hands of the enemy.

As soon as she had been informed of this decision, Hortense despatched a courier, at one o'clock in the morning, to warn her mother to prepare at once for departure for Navarre, where she would be less exposed to danger. The next day the enemy entered Paris, close upon the departure of the royal household, and almost at the same hour that Napoleon himself arrived at Fontainebleau.

Meanwhile, Josephine had acted upon her daughter's advice and had gained in safety the retreat of Navarre, though only after a fright at the prospect of capture by the Cossacks, which must have brought to mind her perils during the first campaign in Italy.

She remained several days a prey to the most agonizing suspense respecting the fate of her daughter, her son, and of Napoleon.

France was invaded, humiliated ; the enemy was in possession of the capital ; more than this she knew not ; two days she rested in this cruel state of uncertainty. But on the second of April, she was rejoiced at the arrival of her daughter and her two children, who had twice narrowly escaped capture by the enemy, while on the road to Navarre. From Hortense she learned that her worst fears were realized, as to the capture of Paris ; but from her she received no tidings of Napoleon. Three days

passed; all the routes leading from Paris, from Fontainebleau, and from Blois, were in possession of the allies, and all information intercepted. But at last, the fourth night, a courier was announced from Fontainebleau. Josephine was apprised of his arrival, and her heart leaped with joy at the prospect of news from the Emperor.

"He is alive, then? Tell me!" she demanded of the messenger. She threw a shawl over her shoulders and admitted him at once into her chamber, the tears raining over her face as the courier detailed all the sad occurrences of the past few days: of the projected abdication, of the decree of banishment to Elba.

"Ah," she sighed; "unhappy Napoleon; exiled to Elba! If it were not for his wife, I should demand to go with him."

She envied Marie Louise the privilege she had of sharing his exile; not doubting her desire to do so, and unable to believe in the perfidy of one who had borne him an heir, and who later dishonored her name and brought reproach upon her royal spouse.

The grief of Hortense was equally profound; it was not alone a crown she had lost, a high fortune cast down; but she lamented the misfortunes of one who had called her daughter, whose regard for her had ever been delicate and tender. Hers was a most unfortunate position: isolated as she was, without a place for retreat; sharing the odium now attached to the name of Bonaparte, without sharing the affections of any of the family. Her mother's



JOSEPHINE, BY PRUD'HON.

position was, if anything, more enviable, for the divorce had rendered her free, had detached her from the family which was now so hateful to the returning Bourbons, and she could still reside in France.

"I have no fortune but my diamonds," she said to a lady of her mother's court; "I will sell them and with the proceeds I will go to Martinique, to the old plantation belonging to my family, which I visited in my youth and where I passed many happy days. There I will rear my children and be content."

That she did not accomplish her intention is well known; and of the career of her youngest son, who become the Napoleon III. of later times, history has informed us.

A lady of the court was despatched to Paris for intelligence of the Emperor and Eugène; but for several days the forsaken ones at Navarre were in ignorance of passing events. On the thirteenth of April Josephine was advised of the conclusion of the treaty, signed two days previously at Fontainebleau, in which the Emperor renounced all claim to the throne of France and Italy, and adopted Elba for his future sovereignty.

To the last, he had been thoughtful of those whose elevation was due to him, who would be affected by his downfall, stipulating that all their rights and privileges should be preserved, and their pensions paid.

Josephine and her family were especially re-

membered, her revenue fixed at a million of francs ; her son and daughter secured in a position compatible to their former station.

These stipulations show clearly that he still regarded her with tenderness ; but he departed from Fontainebleau, on the twenty-first of April, without one word of farewell for her whose heart was slowly breaking from love of him, at the castle of Navarre.

Whilst the Emperor was directing his way to his place of exile, the last week in April, Josephine, yielding to the solicitations of her friends, returned to Malmaison. There she was rejoined by Queen Hortense, who had at first intended to offer her services to Marie Louise ; but being coldly received, had returned to her place of duty by her mother's side. She found a distinguished visitor at Malmaison, in the person of the Emperor Alexander, who, as soon as he had been apprised of Josephine's return, had hastened to assure her of his respect, and to extend to her and her children his protection and sympathy.

Says the Duchess d'Abrantes :—" After Bonaparte's abdication . . . I went to Malmaison the day after receiving his letter from Fontainebleau. . . . My name was no sooner mentioned to the Empress than she desired I should be admitted. . . . She was still in bed, and stretching out her arms as soon as she saw me she burst into tears and exclaimed : ' Alas, Madame Junot ! Madame Junot ! ' I was deeply affected. I knew how sincerely she

was attached to the Emperor; and at this moment every reproach she had to make was cast into the shade by the heavy misfortune which oppressed him. . . . When I told her of my having received a letter from Fontainebleau, she said to me with an eagerness she had never before displayed, 'Oh, I beseech you, do read me that letter; read the *whole* of it; I desire to know everything.' The contents were very painful to Josephine's heart, as many passages related to the King of Rome and to Marie Louise. 'What think you of that woman?' demanded the Empress, looking at me with a remarkable expression of countenance. 'I, Madame? What I have always thought,—that such a woman should never have crossed the frontiers of France. I say so from the bottom of my heart.' 'Indeed,' said Josephine, fixing on me her eyes bathed in tears, but smiling at the idea that I shared her opinion. 'Madame Junot,' said the Empress, at length, 'I have a great mind to write to Napoleon. Would you know the reason? I wish he would permit my accompanying him to the island of Elba, if Marie Louise should keep away. Do you think she will follow him?'

"'Quite the contrary; she is incapable of doing so.'

"I then observed to her that the Emperor's consent that she should go to the island of Elba was more than doubtful. She seemed astonished. 'Why should he refuse it?' 'Because his sisters will assuredly go there, as well as Madame Mère. Let

your Majesty recollect all you have suffered when seated on the throne of France, in the imperial palace of the Tuileries, when strong in the title of the Emperor's consort. If, when you were sovereign, Madame, the Emperor's sisters could disturb your repose, what might they not do at the present day?'

"The Empress fell into a deep meditation, a circumstance of rare occurrence. 'I think you are right,' she said at last; 'I think you are right.' She remained for some time with her head resting upon her hand."

Viewing them in the relation of wife and daughter of a vanquished sovereign, the Emperor Alexander assured Hortense and Josephine of every attention, and with delicate tact endeavored to mitigate the unpleasant features of their situation.

Meanwhile, the Empress was gladdened by the arrival of Eugène, from whom she had been a long time separated, and of whom she had heard nothing for many days. She was now happy and content, in the companionship of both her children, whom she entreated not to leave her, unless they would be instrumental in shortening her life. They promised to remain with her to the last, and her only anxiety now was for the Emperor. Eugène had held out to the very end, only surrendering his command when he could do so with honor, and after stipulating for the safety of his officers and soldiers. His conduct had won universal approbation, and no one thought of hindering his journey to France, for the

honorable purpose of comforting his mother and sister in their unhappy state.

The Emperor Alexander went to Malmaison for the express purpose of renewing to him the offers of assistance he had made to Josephine and Hortense. The Duke of Orleans, as the old friend of his father, whom Eugène so strongly resembled, was also well disposed towards him ; but, as the adopted son of Napoleon, he was to share in the downfall of his chief. Notwithstanding the active and well-meant efforts of Alexander, who would have restored Eugène to his former position, in accordance with the wishes of Napoleon, as expressed in his abdication and at Chatillon, the treaty of Fontainebleau was disregarded.

Deprived of the prospect of her revenue, and under the impression that she was soon to be banished from France, yet Josephine forgot her own troubles in her anxiety for the fate of her children. To secure their welfare, she implored the Emperor of Russia to exert himself in their behalf, as the greatest favor he could bestow upon an abandoned wife and tender mother.

Of her children, and of the unhappy fate of him who had raised them all to the supremest height, and who would have saved them from participation in his fall, had it been possible, she spoke unceasingly.

On the fifteenth of May, the Empress went to pass a few days at the château of Saint-Leu, with Hortense. The Emperor Alexander also visited

there at the same time, and they went to ride in the woods of Montmorency. On her return to Malmaison, Josephine felt so fatigued that she retired to her apartment, leaving her daughter to entertain their guests.

When she had regained the seclusion of her chamber, Josephine threw herself into a reclining chair, in a state of painful melancholy. Her reader, Mlle. Cochelet, had accompanied her, and reports in her memoirs the conversation that then ensued. After a short silence the Empress said sadly, "Mademoiselle Cochelet, I cannot throw off this distressing melancholy which has seized upon me; I have made every effort to conceal it from my children, but I only suffer the more. I begin to lose all hope. The Emperor of Russia seems to be filled with regard and affection for us, but of what good are his promises to my son, my daughter, and her children?

"Is he not in a position to do something for them? Do you know what will happen when he shall have departed? The Bourbons will not fulfill their promises; I shall see my children at their mercy, unhappy; and I cannot endure this thought. . . . I already suffer enough on account of Napoleon, now stripped of all his greatness, exiled to a distant isle, abandoned by all his friends; must I now see my children fugitives, at the sport of evil fortune? . . . I feel that this doubt will kill me."

The *lectrice* tried to comfort her by pointing out

with what assiduity the Emperor of Russia had attended upon her and the zeal he had manifested in her children's cause ; but Josephine was not to be deceived ; she felt assured of the enmity of the Bourbons, and above all of the house of Austria.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DEATH OF JOSEPHINE.

It is true, as Josephine declared, that the Bourbons were indebted to the first wife of Napoleon for many and great favors, some of them even for their lives; yet none of them came near her in her honorable exile, or manifested an interest in her fate. She was, however, "the only member of the imperial family whose titles and honors were preserved;" a guard of honor watched around her retreat, and she was surrounded by the most illustrious personages of Europe. "A few days after the Emperor Alexander's visit to Marie Louise," says Bourrienne, "he paid his respects to Bonaparte's other wife, Josephine. In this breaking up of empires and kingdoms the unfortunate Josephine, who had suffered agonies on account of the husband who had abandoned her, was not forgotten. One of the first things the Emperor of Russia did on arriving at Paris, was to despatch a guard for the protection of Malmaison. . . . The allied sovereigns treated her with delicacy and consideration. As soon as Alexander knew that Josephine had returned to Malmaison he hastened to pay her a visit. It is not pos-

sible to be more amiable than he was to her. When, in the course of conversation, he spoke of the occupation of Paris by the allied armies, and of the position of the Emperor Napoleon, it was always in perfectly measured language ; he never forgot for an instant that he was speaking to the wife of a vanquished enemy.

"On her side, the Empress did not conceal the tender sentiments, the lively affection, she still felt for Napoleon. . . . Alexander certainly had something elevated and magnanimous in his character, which would not permit him to say a single word capable of insulting misfortune ; the Empress had only one prayer to make to him, and that was for her children. This visit was soon followed by another, from the other allied princes. The King of Prussia came frequently, to pay his court to Josephine ; he even dined with her several times at Malmaison ; but the Emperor Alexander came much more frequently. . . . Queen Hortense was always with her mother when she received the sovereigns, and assisted her in doing the honors of the house. The illustrious strangers exceedingly admired Malmaison, which seemed to them a charming residence, and were particularly struck with its fine gardens and conservatories. . . .

"From this time, however, Josephine's health visibly declined, and she did not live to see Napoleon's return from Elba. She often said to her attendants : 'I do not know what is the matter with me, but at times I have fits of melancholy enough to kill

me.' . . . But, on the very brink of the grave, she retained all her amiability, all her love of dress, and the graces and resources of a drawing-room society."

We cannot overlook two letters of this period, attributed to Napoleon and Josephine, and which, if genuine, give us a glimpse into the hearts of their illustrious writers : The first, from Napoleon. . . .

"FONTAINEBLEAU, 16th April, 1814.

"DEAR JOSEPHINE,—I wrote to you on the eighth of this month, but perhaps you have not received my letter, as hostilities still continue, and it may have been intercepted. At present, communication must be re-established.

"I have formed my resolution : I will not repeat what I said to you : then I lamented my situation, now I congratulate myself thereon. . . . I am now free from an enormous weight. My fall was great, but at least it is useful, as men say. In my retreat I shall substitute the pen for the sword. . . . I have heaped benefits upon millions of wretches. What have they done in the end for me? They have all betrayed me. Yes, all. I except from this number the good Eugène, so worthy of you and of me. Adieu, my dear Josephine ; be resigned, as I am, and ever remember him who never forgot, and never will forget you. Farewell, Josephine.

"P. S.—I expect to hear from you at Elba ; I am not very well.

"NAPOLEON."

To which Josephine replied, in this, her last communication to her exiled friend and former husband :

"SIRE,—Now only can I calculate the whole extent of the misfortune of having beheld my union with you dissolved by law ; now indeed do I lament being no more than your friend, who can but mourn over a misfortune great as it is unexpected. . . . I have been on the point of quitting France to follow your footsteps, and to consecrate to you the remainder of an existence which you so long embellished. A single motive restrained me, and that you may divine. If I learn that, contrary to all appearances, I am the *only one* who will fulfill her duty, nothing shall restrain me, and I will go to the only place where henceforth there can be happiness for me, since I shall be able to console you when you are there isolated and unfortunate.

"Say but the word, and I depart. Adieu, sire ; whatever I would add would still be too little ; it is no longer by words that my sentiments for you are to be proved,—and for actions your consent is necessary.

"JOSEPHINE."

Although plunged into the profoundest melancholy, Josephine, in order to reassure her son and daughter, assumed a calmness that was foreign to her feelings. But she could not conceal from them,

from the searching eyes of love, her deep distress and increasing grief. A week passed thus ; though amiable and apparently cheerful in the company of her little court, now so sadly diminished, when alone she abandoned herself to tears and sad reflection. In truth, she was hurt to the heart ; her grief had undermined her health ; the sleepless nights of agony had inflamed her blood. She uttered no complaint, she even tried to maintain her old air of cheerful gayety, but her children and her ladies were oppressed by painful presentiments.

On Monday, the twenty-third of May, the King of Prussia and his two sons came to dine with her, and Josephine, though for days she had been visibly suffering, received them with her old-time grace, and so successfully maintained the character of agreeable hostess, that they departed in the belief that she was fully recovered. The next day she was obliged to receive the Russian Grand Dukes, who afterwards went driving with Eugène, while Hortense remained at home with her mother. As the Empress seemed to be suffering from a slight cold, her daughter urged her to retire to her room ; but she declined, and went down to dinner. In the evening, however, after several attempts to rally from the fatigues of the day, she retired to a near apartment, leaving to Hortense the honors of hostess during the stay of the Russian princes. The next morning, when her reader went to her room for the orders of the day, she found the Empress in tears, and holding in her hand a paper, which she held

out to her, demanding excitedly if her daughter had seen it. "If she has not," she said, "then take good care she does not see it. Read this terrible article, which some one has written, about her poor, dead child. My God! Is it possible? Yes, they have dared to ravish the dead, to descend even to the tomb. It is as though the times of the Revolution had returned. Ah me, what infamy!"

This anonymous attack upon the honor of her cherished child increased her melancholy, and plunged her into a stupor of grief. She became rapidly worse, and on the morrow, as Hortense entered her chamber at an early hour, she found her breathing with difficulty. Greatly alarmed, she called the court physician, who agreed with her that her mother was suffering from more than a common cold, and assented to a consultation. This Josephine opposed, for fear of causing pain to the doctor in attendance; but, in order to allay her children's fears, promised to keep her bed for the day.

Eugène was then suffering from fever, and obliged to remain in his room; but this fact Hortense strove to keep from her mother, and made every preparation for attending both patients, though herself fatigued.

A relapse occurred on the twenty-seventh, of so alarming a nature that Hortense decided to send to Paris for assistance, when she was informed of the arrival of the first physician of the Emperor Alexander's household, with inquiries from his royal master and the information that he himself was to

dine with them at Malmaison, on the morrow. Josephine at once returned her thanks and began to occupy herself with preparations for entertaining her august visitor, whom she proposed to receive in person.* At the solicitation of Hortense, however, the Russian physician was permitted to have an interview with her mother, and he did not conceal from the daughter that the patient's condition was very serious and demanded immediate and energetic measures.

A consultation was held, it was declared that the Empress was suffering from a dangerous attack of quinsy; but, although, the physicians feared it was too late for remedies to be of avail, they concealed their worst fears from the watchers, and awaited in anxiety the result. Queen Hortense scarcely left her mother's side, and then only to hasten to Eugène, whose fever had increased to the point of creating great anxiety in his behalf. The Empress, noticing her son's continued absence, was finally informed of his illness, and begged her daughter to bestow her time upon her brother, or at least to seek the rest she so much needed.

During the night, Josephine sank perceptibly, and the Queen decided to dispatch a messenger to Alex-

* "After the divorce, at Malmaison, she (Josephine) had the same luxurious tastes, and dressed with as much care, even when she saw no one. On the day of her death, she insisted on being dressed in a very elegant *robe de chambre*, because she thought that the Emperor of Russia might come to see her. . . . She died covered with ribbons and pale rose satin."—Mme. de Rémusat.

ander, requesting him to postpone his visit; but before the courier could reach Paris, his Majesty arrived at Malmaison, several hours in advance of the hour appointed, having been anxious to learn of the exact condition of the Empress. Hortense informed him of her fears, and then had him conducted to her brother's chamber, where he passed the day, being rejoined by the Queen at dinner. After the ceremony was over she excused herself and again hastened to her mother's bedside; but the Emperor remained with Eugène until assured that Josephine was resting easily, and took his departure late in the afternoon. His presence had been concealed from Josephine, who, it was feared, would have wished to rise to receive him, and thereby suffer a relapse. Though oppressed by the fatigue of continued watching, Hortense wished to pass the night with her mother, who insisted that she should retire to her own room to rest. One of the ladies in waiting, the Duchess d'Arberg, joined in her entreaties, promising to inform her if she should be be needed, and the Queen retired, though at a late hour, and only after the assurance that she should be notified of the slightest alarming symptom. She went to her room, but not to sleep, several times rising during the night and seeking the bedside of the patient sufferer. Josephine uttered no complaints and did not appear to suffer, except from an increased difficulty of breathing; but she was wakeful, and her mind seemed to be wandering amid the scenes of the recent past. She frequently repeated

in a low tone, as if communing with herself: "Bonaparte . . . Elba . . . Marie Louise." Alarmed at this incoherence, Hortense sought her brother, who, somewhat recovered from his fever, accompanied her to the Empres's chamber. Their mother was still conscious; as her children approached the bedside her eyes filled with tears, and she endeavored to stretch forth her arms to embrace them. But those loving arms, so often their refuge in the past, which had ever encircled them, protecting them from the attacks of hate and malice, were now powerless to bestow the last, farewell embrace. It was with difficulty Josephine could speak to them, and her features had so changed, in the short time that had elapsed since they last saw her, that they were forced to recognize the near approach of final dissolution. Oppressed by her emotions, Hortense was obliged to retire from the chamber, while Eugène, summoning all his courage, gathered his mother tenderly in his arms, pressing her head to his breast. There she lay, peacefully, looking the love she could not adequately express in words, while her son scanned the faces of the physicians, to learn if this were, indeed, the last hour of Josephine's fitful existence. They could give him no hope, and intimated that it were well, if she so desired, that she should be provided with the last sacraments. The Queen's chaplain was summoned, and, leaving him to prepare their mother for the viaticum, the son and daughter retired to the chapel, where they knelt in prayer. Soon they re-

turned to the chamber of death. As they entered, Josephine vainly attempted to embrace them, and made a futile effort to speak. Her features had undergone a mortal change ; it was but too evident that her last hour had arrived, and Hortense, overcome by this conviction, fainted, and was borne from the chamber. Kneeling at his mother's side, Eugène drew her within his embrace, where, a few minutes later, with a last look of love in her glazing eyes, she expired.*

Imprinting a kiss upon the pallid lips, Eugène gently released the inanimate form, and with trembling steps sought his sister, to inform her of their misfortune, and to mingle his tears with hers. The household of Malmaison was plunged into mourning, and as the sad intelligence spread abroad, the people in all places and of all degrees lamented their "good Josephine," whose hold upon their hearts was strong and deep.

"In company with Mme. d'Arberg," wrote Mlle. Cochelet, "I remained by the side of her whose life had fled, and, thinking to preserve a souvenir of the departed, for those she had loved so well, I cut off a portion of the beautiful tresses, which enframed the face, now so calm, and upon which rested a peaceful smile. . . .

* The (alleged) last words of Josephine were :

"At least, I shall die regretted ; I have always desired the happiness of France ; I did all in my power to contribute to it ; and I can say with truth, to all of you now present, that the first wife of Napoleon never caused a single tear to flow."

"It would be impossible to depict the grief of the Prince Eugène, and Queen Hortense, at the loss of this adorable mother, whose life had been one long devotion to them and her family."

The body of the Empress was embalmed, enclosed in a double casket of lead and mahogany, and exposed upon a catafalque in the grand vestibule, where it was visited by upwards of twenty thousand people. Even gay and frivolous Paris was visibly affected by the sad intelligence of Josephine's death, where it inflicted a painful impression upon all.

All, sovereigns and foreign princes; even the royal family of France, sent their condolences to the children of the late Empress. The Emperor Alexander, who had intended paying his respects in person, learning that Eugène could not attend the obsequies, on account of his illness, sent one of his generals to represent him.

The last tributes were offered on the second of June, in the church of Rueil, which had been restored by the care of Josephine, and in which she had expressed a wish to be interred. The funeral cortége issued from the great gate of Malmaison and took the road towards Paris, as far as Rueil. The two children of Hortense, one of whom afterwards ascended the throne of France as Napoleon III., were the chief mourners. The honorary pall-bearers were: the Grand Duke of Baden, husband of the Princess Stephanie; the Marquis de Beauharnais, brother-in-law to Josephine; the Count

Tascher, ex-senator, and the father of the Princess of Baden, the Count de Beauharnais.

Following them, the officials and ladies of the imperial household, attachés of Prince Eugène, and of Queen Hortense, and many personages of distinction from the capital, come to testify their respect to one who had won the hearts of all.

The most affecting testimonial of spontaneous affection was manifested by the concourse of common people, who came from all parts of the surrounding country, to look their last upon her who had ever opened her heart to their woes and her purse to the alleviation of their distresses.

"She expired at noon of Sunday, the 26th of May, in the fifty-third year of her age. Her body was embalmed, and on the sixth day after her death deposited in a vault in the church of Rueil, close to Malmaison. The funeral ceremonies were magnificent; but a better tribute to the memory of Josephine was to be found in the tears with which her children, her servants, the neighboring poor, and all that knew her, followed her to the grave.

"In 1826 a beautiful monument was erected over her remains by Eugène Beauharnais and his sister, with this simple inscription: . . .

"To Josephine.

"Eugene. Hortense."

CHAPTER XXX.

IN RETROSPECT.

JOSEPHINE had been in her grave at Rueil nearly a year, when Bonaparte returned from Elba, where he had vainly awaited the arrival of Marie Louise. He found Hortense in Paris, and together they visited Malmaison. During the absence of Eugène, who was detained in Germany, and during the period of Napoleon's absence at Elba, Hortense had been faithful to the imperial fortunes, although she had received some favors from his enemies, the Bourbons.

They alighted at the gate of Malmaison; as they entered the vestibule, Napoleon was greatly moved.

Taking the arm of his adopted daughter, he walked with her in the gardens, through the park, and in the conservatory, conversing of her whose works greeted them from every side, had been the objects of her care. At every turn of walk or alley, at the entrance to every shaded pathway, it seemed to these mourners that she should appear to them, as she had been in life, the animating presence, the soul of life and gayety. Filled with oppressive thoughts, they entered the dwelling and breakfasted in silence.

Then the Emperor slowly traversed the gallery filled with the pictures Josephine had so carefully collected there; the many works of art which had been the objects of her jealous care. After inspecting them, Napoleon manifested his desire to visit the chamber in which his wife had died. Hortense was about to accompany him, but he signed her to remain, and alone pursued his way to this well-remembered apartment, which was to him fraught with so many tender memories. He remained a long time beside the bed in which Josephine had breathed her last, lost in reverie, dwelling upon the memory of that one who had once lived with him in intimate companionship, then he descended to rejoin Hortense, a prey to emotions which he did not attempt to conceal. That night, again, he was at the Tuileries, where, says Bourrienne, "even more than at Fontainebleau, his mind was flooded by the deep and painful recollections of the past. A few nights after his return hither he sent for M. Horan, one of the physicians who had attended Josephine during her last illness. 'So, Monsieur Horan, you did not leave the Empress during her malady?' 'No, Sire.' 'What was the cause of that malady?' 'Uneasiness of mind. . . . Grief.' . . . 'What? You believe that?' (and Napoleon laid a strong emphasis on the word *believe*, looking steadfastly in the doctor's face). He then asked, 'Was she long ill? Did she suffer much?' 'She was ill a week, Sire, her Majesty suffered little bodily pain.' 'Did she see that she was dying? Did she show courage?' 'A sign her

Majesty made, when she could no longer express herself, leaves me no doubt that she felt her end approaching, she seemed to contemplate it without fear.'

'Well, . . . well,' and then Napoleon, much affected, drew close to Monsieur Horan, and added: 'You say that she was in grief, from what did that arise?' 'From passing events, Sire, from your Majesty's position last year.' 'Ah, she used to speak of me, then?' 'Very often.' Here Napoleon drew his hand across his eyes, which seemed filled with tears. He then went on: . . . 'Good woman. . . . Excellent Josephine. . . . She loved me truly,—she —did she not?' . . . Ah, she was a French woman.' 'Yes, Sire, she loved you, and she would have proven it had it not been for dread of displeasing you, she had conceived an idea.' . . . 'How? . . . What would she have done?'

"She one day said that, as Empress of the French, she would drive through Paris, with eight horses to her coach, and all her household in gala livery, to go and rejoin you at Fontainebleau, and never leave you more."

"Napoleon again betrayed deep emotion, on recovering from which he asked the physician the most minute questions about the nature of Josephine's disease, the friends and attendants who were around her at the hour of her death, and the conduct of her children."

Two months later, Bonaparte left Paris for his last campaign, which was to result in death, in

exile or a crown. He speedily returned, having lost, at Waterloo, all he had staked : crown, country, wife and son.

Convinced that there was now no alternative to leaving France forever, the Emperor desired to pass the few remaining days of his liberty at Malmaison. Hortense, his ever-faithful friend in misfortune, came to keep him company, almost the sole remaining companion of his former greatness. Napoleon remained five days at Malmaison, vainly attending the awakening of the country's dormant patriotism ; he was still ready to attempt again resistance to the invaders. But the interests of France demanded his sacrifice ; not on the field of battle, where he would gladly have died, but as an exile, beyond the borders of the country he had made so great.

Five days he lived in suspense, surrounded by the evidences of his happier life now past and gone, dwelling upon the scenes of those departed days when at his side walked a loving companion, whose presence was a charm against gloom and melancholy.

It was most fitting, that Napoleon should return to this spot, of all others most intimately associated with his happiest moments, to muse upon his vanished greatness, and pass in review the incidents of his eventful life.

His career ended here ; at Malmaison the curtain falls before the stage upon which he had performed such glorious feats of arms ; Napoleon the warrior, the king-maker, the conqueror of states and empires,

before whom the world had trembled, all Europe prostrated herself, is seen here alone, abandoned by all, preparing for flight. At last, it had come to this! On the twenty-ninth of June, 1815, at midday, bidding farewell to Hortense, and to such of his friends as remained, Napoleon departed for Rochefort, there hoping to take passage for the United States. Disappointed, betrayed, watched by his relentless foe, who guarded with her ships every avenue of escape, he surrendered to England; throwing himself upon her generosity,—to receive his reward at Saint Helena.

He no longer cherished the delusion, so jealously maintained at Elba, that his wife would rejoin him in captivity; but Napoleon was well persuaded that, had Josephine been alive, he would not have been forsaken thus.

Three years after the death of Napoleon, at Saint Helena, the son of Josephine, Eugène, the faithful follower of his adopted father, was laid in the grave. Says Bourrienne:

"The Viceroy of Italy was in Vienna when Napoleon returned from Elba, and fell under the suspicion of the allies of having informed the Emperor of their intention of removing him from the island. He was detained in Bavaria by his father-in-law, the King, to whose court he retired, and who, in 1817, created him Duke of Leuchtenberg and Prince of Eichstadt. With the protection of Bavaria, he actually succeeded in wringing from the Bourbons some 700,000 francs of the property of his mother.

A first attack of apoplexy struck him in 1823, and he died from a second in February, 1824, at Munich. His descendants have intermarried into the royal families of Portugal, Sweden, Brazil, Russia and Würtemburg."

"Josephine's daughter, Hortense, separated from her husband, Louis Bonaparte, and created Duchess of St. Leu by Louis XVIII., was in Paris, much suspected by the Bourbons, but really engaged in a lawsuit with her husband about the custody of her sons, when Napoleon arrived from Elba. She had to go into hiding when the news of the landing arrived, but her empty house, left unwatched, became very useful for receiving the Bonapartists, who wished for a place of concealment,—amongst them being, of all people, Fouché!

"Hortense was met by Napoleon with some reproaches for accepting a title from the Bourbons, but she did the honors of the Elysée for him; and it is creditable to both of them, that, braving the vile slanders about their previous intercourse, she was with him to the end; and that one of the last persons to embrace him at Malmaison before he started for the coast, was his adopted daughter, the child of his discarded wife.

"Hortense's presence in Paris was thought to be too dangerous, by the Prussian governor, and she was peremptorily ordered to leave . . . and she had to start at the shortest notice on a wandering life to Aix, Baden, and Constance, till the generosity of the small but brave canton of Thurgau enabled

her to get a resting-place at the Château of Arenenberg.

"In 1831 she lost her second son, the eldest then surviving, who died from fever in a revolutionary attempt in which he and his younger brother, the future Napoleon III., were engaged.

"She was able to visit France *incognita*, and even to see Louis Philippe and his queen; but her presence in the country was soon thought dangerous, and she was urged to leave. In 1836 Hortense's third and last son, Louis Napoleon, made his attempt at an *émeute* at Strasburg and was shipped off to America by the Government. She went to France to plead for him, and then, worn out by grief and and anxiety, returned to Arenenberg, which her son, the future Emperor, only succeeded in reaching in time to see her die, in October, 1837.

"She was laid with Josephine at Rueil."

In the month of August, 1831, a sorrowing woman, an exile from France, which she was then leaving, came to and mysteriously entered the little church at Rueil. She was accompanied by a young man who had come with her to pay their last respects to the memory of Josephine. The Empress' daughter and grandson prostrated themselves at the foot of her statue which surmounts the tomb, and there remained a long time engaged in prayer.

"What sorrowful feelings oppressed me," wrote Hortense in her Memoirs, "as I entered this sacred place, as I knelt before the image of my cherished mother; and the sad thought possessed me that, of

all she had loved, I was left alone, with my son, isolated from my kindred, and even obliged to fly from the place where she herself reposed. The quantities of flowers which adorned the monument (which my brother and myself had, with so much trouble, obtained permission to raise to her memory) proved to me that she rested in the midst of friends, to whom her memory was still dear; her daughter alone was forgotten. . . .

"I paused at the portal of Malmaison, prevented from entering by the orders of the proprietor. . . . But I recalled that here the Emperor had last rested, ere he left France forever. It was here that I was enabled to minister to him in those sad moments, when, abandoned by all, he was plunged into the greatest of his misfortunes. Here I saw him, after Waterloo, still full of courage, and forgetting his own misfortunes in the greater ones which had overwhelmed his country, which he still wished to defend. But they feared what they called his chains, and in the name of liberty they delivered themselves into the hands of their enemies."

Six years later, in accordance with her last wishes, her remains were placed within the same church at Rueil, where to-day may be seen the monuments inscribed with "HORTENSE" and "JOSEPHINE": names which appeal to all lovers of goodness and truth.

During his long exile on the rock of Saint Helena, Bonaparte frequently referred to Josephine, and in his Memoirs pays ample tribute to her worth.

Although he never gave utterance to any doubt respecting his second wife, even if convinced of her perfidy, yet he could not but compare her with Josephine, to the latter's advantage. "Josephine, at least," said he, "would never have abandoned me. I was attached to both my wives; the one was the votary of art and the graces; the other was all innocence and simple nature; and each had a very high degree of merit. . . . The first, at no moment of her life, ever assumed a position or attitude that was not pleasing or captivating; it was impossible to take her by surprise, or to make her feel the least inconvenience. She employed every resource of art to heighten natural attractions, but with such ingenuity as to render every trace of allurement imperceptible. The other, on the contrary, never suspected that anything was to be gained by innocent artifice.

"The one was always somewhat short of the truth of nature; the other was altogether frank and open, and was a stranger to subterfuge. The first never asked me for anything, but was always in debt to every one; the second freely asked whenever she wanted, which, however, very seldom happened, and she never thought of receiving anything without immediately paying for it.

"Both were amiable and gentle, and strongly attached to me. . . .

"A son by Josephine would have completed my happiness, not only in a political point of view, but as a source of domestic felicity. As a political result

it would have secured to me the possession of the throne ; the French people would have been as much attached to the son of Josephine as they were to the King of Rome ; and I should not have set my foot on an abyss covered with a bed of flowers. . . . But how vain are all human calculations ! Who can pretend to decide on what may lead to happiness or unhappiness in this life ? Still, I cannot help believing that such a pledge of our union would have proved a source of domestic felicity ; it would have put an end to the jealousy of Josephine, by which I was continually harassed, and which after all was the offspring of policy rather than of sentiment. . .

"Josephine despaired of having a child, and she in consequence looked forward with dread to the future. She was well aware that no marriage is perfect without children ; and at the time of her second nuptials there was no longer any probability of her becoming a mother. In proportion as her fortune advanced her alarm increased."

Josephine possessed a perfect knowledge of the different shades of the Emperor's character, and she exhibited the most exquisite tact in turning this knowledge to account. "For example," said the Emperor, "she never solicited any favor for Eugène, or thanked me for any that I conferred on him. She never even showed any additional complaisance or assiduity at the moment when the greatest honors were lavished on him. Her grand aim was to prove that this was my affair, not hers, and that it tended to my advantage.

"She never failed to accompany me on all my journeys; neither fatigue nor privation could deter her from following me; and she employed importunity and even artifice to gain her point. . . . If I stepped into my carriage at midnight, to set out on the longest journey, to my surprise I found Josephine all ready prepared, though I had no idea of her accompanying me. 'But,' I would say to her, 'you cannot possibly go, the journey is too long and will be too fatiguing for you.' 'Not at all,' she would reply. 'Besides, I must set out instantly.' 'Well, I am quite ready.' 'But you must take a great deal of luggage.' 'Oh, no, everything is packed up;' and I was generally obliged to yield. In a word, Josephine rendered her husband happy, and constantly proved herself his sincerest friend. At all times and on all occasions she manifested the most perfect submission and devotedness; and thus I shall never cease to remember her with tenderness and gratitude." *

It has been said that the life of the Empress Josephine offers little valuable material for history; but we venture to believe the contrary; for it cannot, certainly, be unprofitable to study the career

* "Before Austerlitz," wrote Mme. de Rémusat, "the Empress was as fully confident as the wife of Bonaparte would naturally be. Happy to be allowed to accompany him and escape from the talk of Paris, and delighted with the fresh opportunity for display, she looked on a campaign as on a journey, and maintained a composure which, as it could not, by reason of her position, proceed from indifference, was a genuine compliment to him whom she firmly believed Fortune would not dare to forsake."

of one whose life was so eventful, whose character and social influence always rose to the level required by her high destiny. And again: her life is the canvas upon which, in strong relief, we may find projected the character of that great genius with whom her fortune was so intimately associated. In the record of her life we may find that of her glorious consort; but here we discover, not the Napoleon known to the world of war, to the courtiers and statesmen, but find him dwelling in the intimacy of his family; a man of heart, of sensibilities, of domesticity and loving traits, that bind his friends inseparably to him. We find incontestible evidence that Napoleon possessed, what has been denied him by his enemies, the capacity for love and for constant affection. The history of Josephine's life, therefore, is necessary to complete that of Napoleon: to soften the stern and martial figure that shines isolate in his battles; in fact, to give a human aspect to one who has been declared devoid of the tenderer traits of humanity.*

But we should note that the grander figure of Bonaparte does not overshadow or efface that of his gentler companion; far from seeming incongruous, in truth, the image of Josephine completely harmonizes with that of the modern Charlemagne.

His rugged strength is tempered by her elegance, his brusqueness by her sweetness, his wit by her tact, his passion by her mildness.

To Josephine belongs the signal honor of main-

* Aubenas.

taining herself with credit by the side of this master of Europe, when at the resplendent summit of his ambitions. She does not shine solely in the reflection of his refulgence, but she is held in loving remembrance for her own remarkable personality, her memory still cherished by a nation which knew her only to admire.

Unlike Napoleon's second wife, Josephine possessed, notwithstanding her amiable and complaisant nature, a strong and vigorous personality ; she has impressed herself upon the life of the times in which she dwelt, upon the attention of those who have succeeded her.

NAPOLEON—JOSEPHINE :—these two inseparable names recall two types of character which will be forever popular : in the one will be admired his genius and his grandeur ; in the other her grace and goodness ; but impartial history will place above these attributes, her devotion and abnegation.

"*C'est mon divorce qui m'a perdu,*" said Napoleon, when, at Saint Helena, he passed his life in sad review before him, and reflected upon the unhappy consequences of the alliance with the house of Austria.

What would he have added could he have had the gift of prescience and have seen into the future ?

He had sundered the ties that bound him to Josephine, for the ostensible reason that his destiny and his country demanded an heir ; but after the birth of that heir, he lost the crown which was the object of the heritage.

At the outset Bonaparte had provided, for the safeguard of France and the stability of his dynasty, a royal succession.

In default of an heir on his part the crown was to pass to his brother Joseph, or to Louis, or to the heir of one of these two brothers. The Emperor and his eldest brother dying without male issue, the crown was to pass to the King of Holland and his descendants.

Was it not the irony of fate, that the original provision for the royal succession should eventually be fulfilled, and that a son of Louis and grandson of Josephine should occupy the throne, in the person of Napoleon III. ? Providence, or Fate, had rectified the great error of Napoleon's life, by carrying out his first intention for the perpetuation of the Napoleonic dynasty !

Mariage de Jh" Gaspard de Lascher de la pagerie et de Rose Claire de Pannois.

Aujourd'hui 9 novembre 1761 Je soussigné missionnaire apostolique, curé de la paroisse St Jean Baptiste de la Rivière-Salée (île Martinique) desservant en même temps la paroisse de notre dame de la purification des Trois-Ilets, après la publication des trois bans faite au prone de la messe paroissiale les dimanches 24 Octobre, mercredi St Simon & St Juste 28 Octobre & dimanche 1st novembre sans qu'il se soit trouvé opposition ni opposition quelconque. Ayant vu aussi en même temps le certificat du Révérend père Ambroise curé de la Paroisse de St Louis du Fort Royal dite île qui certifie avoir également publié les trois bans à la messe paroissiale dans la dite église St Louis du Fort-Royal sans qu'il se soit trouvé aucune opposition ni empêchement quelconque, vû le certificat de Mr le Général, j'ai conjoint en légitime mariage Messire Joseph Gaspard de Lascher chevalier seigneur de la pagerie, natif de la paroisse de St Jacque du Carbet de la dite île lieutenant des canoniers & Bombardiers, fils en légitime mariage de Messire Joseph Gaspard de Lascher chevalier seigneur de la pagerie & de Jane Marie Françoise Bouveau de la Chevalerie demoiselle demeurant en la ville de Fort-Royal de cette île & demoiselle Rose Claire des Vergers de Pannois native de cette paroisse notre dame de la purification des

Trois-Rets, fille en légitime mariage de Messire Joseph Desvergers de Sayois et de Dame Marie Catherine Browne, natifs et habitans du quartier et paroisse de notre Dame de la purification des Trois-Rets en la Isle ste, le tout fait en face de notre mère la Ste Eglise du consentement mutuelle des parties, assistés de leurs proches parens, amis et témoins qui sont Mre Gauteaume, chevalier de l'ordre militaire de St Louis, commandant au quartier des Trois-Rets, Mrs d'Audifredy capitaine de cavalerie, Mrs Girar-=din, ancien officier, Mre Assier fils, major de la compagnie de volontaire, fait ce même jour et an que dessus. (signé) Tascher de la pagerie, Sayois de la pagerie, Rose de la pagerie, Brown de Sayois, la Chevalerie de la Pagerie, Elisabeth Doins, Desvergers de Sayois Girardin d'Audifredy, Gauteaume, Assier fils, Girardin et frère Yves, (cajou-=ein ecrit./.

APPENDIX.

I.

English account of the capture of Martinique,—1762. From the "Chronological History of the West Indies," by Captain Thomas Southey : London, 1827.

"Upon the fifth of January, Rear-Admiral Rodney, with eighteen sail of the line, besides frigates, bombs, and transports, and eighteen battalions of troops, 13,965 men, under the command of Major General Monckton, sailed from Barbados. Admiral Rodney detached five sail of the line to Fort Royal Bay, and ordered one of the ships to hoist a flag similar to his. At the same time, to distract the enemy's attention, five frigates were sent off La Trinité, on the opposite side of the island ; he anchored himself on the 8th, in St. Ann's Bay, Martinico. The line-of-battle ships silenced the batteries on that part of the coast, in doing which the "Reasonable" was lost, on a reef of rocks ; her men and stores were saved. The general, however, judging this to be an improper place for landing the troops, sent two brigades, commanded by Generals Haviland and Grant, to the bay of Petit Anse. The troops were landed and marched to the heights opposite Pigeon Island.

"On the 10th, Captain Hervey, in the "Dragon," silenced a strong fort in Grand Anse, landed his marines and took possession of it, until General Haviland sent Colonel Melville, with eight hundred men, to relieve him. General Haviland, finding the roads impassable for cannon, sent to

inform General Monckton that the troops had better be reimbarked. During the night the brigades were attacked, but the assailants were compelled to retreat with loss ; and the troops, after blowing up the batteries at St. Ann's, re-embarked and proceeded to Fort Royal Bay. Various feints were ordered at different parts of the island.

" Early in the morning of the sixteenth, the ships began to cannonade the batteries in Cas-des-navire Bay. Having silenced them by noon, the troops were landed without loss, and General Monckton formed his army on the heights above the bay, and as soon as the tents could be landed, encamped there.

" The general resolved to besiege Fort Royal, and to carry the height of Garnier and Tortueson, which the enemy appeared resolved to defend. The English had to cross a ravine to attack, and to defend them a battery was necessary. On the 24th, at day-dawn, Brigadier-General Grant, at the head of the grenadiers, supported by Lord Rollo's brigade, attacked the enemy. At the same time, Brigadier Rufane, with his brigade, reinforced by the marines, marched to attack the redoubts along the shore to the right, one thousand seamen, in flat-bottomed boats, rowing up as he advanced ; and another brigade, under Colonel Scott, went to turn the enemy upon their left, which they did ; at the same time the grenadiers were driving all before them. By nine A. M., Morne Tortueson and all the redoubts and batteries with which it was defended, were in possession of the English. The French retired in confusion to Morne Garnier and Fort Royal. Colonel Scott, with Walsh's brigade, advanced on the left and took an advantageous position opposite Morne Garnier ; these were supported by Haviland's corps, and the road between was covered by the marines.

" Next day, the English began to erect batteries against the citadel of Fort Royal, but were greatly annoyed from Morne Garnier. At four P. M., on the 27th, the French made a furious

attack on the posts occupied by the light infantry and Haviland's brigade ; but were repulsed with great loss, and the English passed the ravine with the fugitives, seized their batteries and took possession of the ground. Walsh's brigade and the grenadiers under Grant, marched to their assistance when the attack began. By nine P. M., this very strong post was completely carried. It commanded the citadel, against which their own artillery was turned, the next morning. The French regulars had retired into the town, but the militia dispersed into the country. On the 30th, the general ordered Morne Capuchin to be taken, and upon it batteries to be erected about four hundred yards from the fort. The enemy, seeing the preparations for attacking the place, beat the *chamade* on the evening of the 3d of February. Next day the governor surrendered the place by capitulation ; on the 4th of February the gate of the citadel was given up to the English. The garrison, to the number of eight hundred, marched out, next morning, with honors of war.

" Deputations now arrived from the different quarters of the island desiring a capitulation ; but M. de la Touche, the governor-general, retired with his forces to St. Pierre, which he proposed to defend. . . . Fourteen privateers were found in the harbor of Fort Royal. As the troops were embarking to attack St. Pierre, two deputies from de la Touche arrived with proposals for the capitulation of the whole island. On the 14th February the terms were settled, on the 16th the English took possession of St. Pierre, and all the forts, while the governor, with M. Rouille, the lieutenant governor, and his staff, with some grenadiers, were embarked for France in transports.

" The conquest of this island cost the English about four hundred men, including officers, killed and wounded.

" By the articles of capitulation, all the troops were to be sent to France, at his Britannic Majesty's expense. The

request that the "militia and other inhabitants that now make part of the said garrison, may retire to their homes, with their servants, likewise" was granted ; and under this capitulation, M. de Tascher was allowed to leave promptly for his plantation.

"The islands of St. Lucia, Tobago, and St. Vincent, were taken by the English the same month, and are to-day in British possession."

1763—"The island of Martinique was infested by ants, to such an extent that it was seriously debated whether it might not have to be abandoned. These ants were supposed to have been brought here in the slave ships from Africa. In Martinico they destroyed all the culinary vegetables ; the quadrupeds were hardly able to subsist ; the largest trees were so infested that even the most voracious birds would not light on them. In short the greatest precautions were requisite to prevent their attacks on men who were afflicted with sores, on women who were confined in child-bed, and on children who were unable to assist themselves."

II.

Slaves—1751. "M. Bossu, whose testimony, Mr. Lang says, is of great weight, relates that some French planters force their slaves to such hard labor that they refuse to marry, in order to avoid generating a race of beings to be enslaved to such masters, who treat them, when old and infirm, worse than their dogs and horses. . . . I have seen, he adds, a planter, whose name was Chaperon, who forced one of his negroes into a heated oven, where the poor wretch expired ; and, his jaws being shrivelled up, the barbarous owner said : 'I believe the rascal is laughing at me,' and took a poker to stir him up."

The death penalty was applied for most trivial offences. In Jamaica (English) in quelling an insurrection of the black

maroons, "the prisoners were found guilty of rebellion, and put to death by a variety of torments—some *burned, some fixed alive upon gibbets.* One of these lived eight days and eighteen hours, suspended under a vertical sun, without any sustenance, or even water. . . . Two of the ringleaders were hung up alive in irons, on a gibbet erected in the parade of the town of Kingston. Fortune lived seven days, but Kingston survived till the ninth. The morning before the latter expired he appeared to be convulsed from head to foot, and upon being opened after his decease, his lungs were found adhering to the back so tightly that it required some force to disengage them. They behaved all the time with a degree of hardened insolence and brutal insensibility."

Slaves—1774. A Mr. Jefferys (mentioned in "Southey's West Indies,") saw seven slaves executed at one time in Tobago ; their right arms were chopped off, and they were then dragged to seven stakes and burned to death. One of them, named Chubb, stretched his arm out on the block, and coolly pulled up his sleeve. He would not be drawn, but walked to the stake. One, named Sampson, was hung alive in chains, and was seven days dying. Their crimes were murder and destroying property.

The *Tritri*—From a colonial law enacted 1763. "All persons who shall place cloth in the rivers for the purpose of taking small fish called *tritri*, shall be subjected to the same penalties as are prescribed for the turning the course of rivers for larger fish : viz. : flogging for slaves, and the pillory for three days ; and of greater punishment in case of repetition. Slaves detected in the act of poisoning rivers for the taking of fish, to be sentenced to the galleys for life."

1763—10th February—A definitive treaty of peace was concluded at Paris, and by article (8) it was declared that the king of Great Britain "shall restore to France the islands of Guadeloupe, Mariegalante, Desirade, Martinico

and Belleisle ; and the fortresses of those islands shall be restored in the same condition they were in when they were conquered by the British arms," etc.

III.

The Great Hurricane :—Southey's "West-Indies."

"1766. At Martinico, upon the 13th of August, a dreadful hurricane began, at ten P. M., with a gale from the northwest. At midnight the shock of an earthquake added to the horrors of the increased hurricane. At three A. M., the gale abated, and the streets of St. Pierre appeared covered with ruins. The roads were blocked by trees torn up by the roots ; the rivers had brought down stones of enormous size, and the shore was strewn with wrecks and dead bodies. At five A. M., a water-spout burst upon Mt. Peleus, and overwhelmed the neighboring plains. At six it was quite calm and the sea was smooth.

"Twenty-eight French and seven English vessels were wrecked, besides twelve passage canoes. Ninety persons perished under the ruins of their own houses, and twice that number were wounded in St. Pierre alone. In going over the island, we shall find nearly the same calamities, and in some places still worse."

The year 1766 was celebrated for the numerous earthquakes and hurricanes, throughout the West Indies.

In the present century, probably the most disastrous hurricane that visited Martinique was in the year 1891, in the month of August.

The writer of this biography visited the island four months after this terrible event, and was a witness to the distress and destitution throughout the island. It will probably never recover from the blow, and the character of the population has been so affected, by the hegira of the white inhabitants, as to impress even a casual observer.

The following account of the hurricane of 1891, is from the Report of the Hon. A. B. Keevil, U. S. Consul :

"Early on the morning of the 18th of August the sky presented a very leaden appearance, decidedly threatening, with occasional gusts of variable winds, mostly from E. N. E. The temperature was very oppressive during the entire day. The barometer varied only slightly, but was a little higher than usual until afternoon, when it commenced to fall, at first gradually and then very rapidly.

"It is stated by fishermen who were in the vicinity of the Caraval Rock at ten A. M., that an immense wave, about 100 feet high passed from the direction of St. Lucia, closely followed by another smaller one, although the sea in the vicinity was quite calm at the time.

The storm struck the east side of the island at about six P. M., rushing through the ravines with terrible force and destroying everything in its path. On the elevated plains the ruin was most complete. One very peculiar feature of the hurricane was the deafness experienced by every one during the storm (possibly the result of the reduced barometric pressure). During the cyclone the wind veered from E. N. E. to S. S. E., the latter being the most destructive. During the storm there were incessant flashes of sheet lightning, unaccompanied by thunder, and immediately after the storm there were two distinct shocks of earthquake, at intervals of about five seconds. Early in September I visited Trinite, and all the way the destruction was most complete, the trees and vegetation looking as though there had been a forest fire, although without the charred appearance. The cane suffered least, and the loss, with favorable weather, will not amount to more than one-fifth of its value. The factories and distilleries appear to have been more completely destroyed than other property.

"The thermometer ranged from 90° to 100° Fahrenheit during the storm. There was a deluge of rain, one account

stating that over four inches fell in a few hours that evening. My own residence was unroofed and flooded with water, as was the case with nine-tenths of the buildings in St. Pierre, and throughout the island; the loss of life was small in St. Pierre, but large in the interior towns, notably in Morne Rouge, where eight in one family lost their lives. The total loss of life, so far as reliable information can be obtained, was 700, and the loss of property was enormous. All the fruit, the main reliance of the laboring class, was destroyed, and prices of provisions have advanced 300 per cent. Every vessel was wrecked or badly damaged, about 50 sail in all. The scene the island presents would be difficult to describe, and the inhabitants are sorely stricken and demoralized. Such a night of terror the imagination can scarcely picture."

1770. Of the Creoles, an English writer observes:—

"We may see a very fine young woman awkwardly dangling her arms with the air of a negro servant, lolling almost the whole day upon beds or settees, her head muffled up with two or three handkerchiefs, her dress loose and without stays. At noon we find her gobbling pepper-pot, seated on the floor, with her sable handmaids around her. In the afternoon she takes her *siesta*, as usual, while two or three of these damsels refresh her face with the gentle breathings of the fan, and a third provokes the drowsy powers of Morpheus by delicious scratchings on the sole of either foot. When she arouses from sleep her speech is whining, languid and childish. . . . When arrived at mature age, the consciousness of her ignorance makes her abscond from the sight or conversation of every rational creature. Her ideas are narrowed to the ordinary subjects that pass before her: the business of the plantation, the tittle-tattle of the parish, the tricks, superstitions, diversions, and profligate discourses of the black servants, equally illiterate and unpolished. . . .

" Whilst (he adds) I render all praise to the Creole ladies for their many amiable qualities, impartiality forbids me to suppress what is highly to their discredit. I mean their disdaining to nurse their own offspring. . . . Numberless have been the poor little victims to this pernicious custom. . . ."

IV.

1778. December. A most sanguinary contest between the French and the English took place in the island of St. Lucia ; the cannonading must have been heard at Martinique "The English sailed to the attack from Barbadoes, and had nearly reduced the forts. The last French flag in sight among the hills was not struck, when M. d'Estaing, with a large force, hove in sight. Besides his original squadron of 12 heavy line-of-battle ships, he was accompanied by a numerous fleet of frigates, privateers, and transports, with 9,000 troops on board. As the day was far advanced, d'Estaing deferred his operations until the following morning. . . . The British General, Meadows, was in possession of very strong ground ; and his men, though only 1,300 in number, were veteran troops, who had distinguished themselves in America. . . . The French commander determined to attack the peninsula by sea and land at the same time, and about 5,000 of their troops advanced, led by the Count d'Estaing, and the Marquis de Bouillé, the governor of Martinico. The remainder of the troops were kept to watch General Prescott's brigade, and to check any attempt that might be made to succor General Meadows. . . . On the approach of the columns they were enfiladed with great effect, by the batteries on the south of the bay. Notwithstanding this, they charged with great impetuosity, and were suffered to advance close to the entrenchment when the British line fired but once and then received the enemy on the point of the bayonet. The French,

with great resolution, suffered extremely before they were entirely repulsed. As soon as they could be formed again, the attack was renewed ; they were again repulsed ; and again, the third time, they returned to the charge. But the affair was soon decided : they were totally broken, and retired in the utmost disorder, leaving their dead and wounded on the field, 400 killed and 1,100 wounded, *a number considerably superior to the enemy they had attacked.*

M. d'Estaing having rendered himself accountable for the wounded as prisoners of war, he was allowed to have them, and to bury the dead. He remained for ten days afterwards, upon the island, without making any further attempt by sea or by land. On the 28th, he embarked his troops, and on the day following abandoned the island. Before he was out of sight, the Chevalier de Micoud and the principal inhabitants offered to capitulate, and very favorable terms were granted them. The commandant and garrison were sent to Martinique as prisoners of war to be exchanged, without their arms, and on parole. . . .

Soon after Count d'Estaing had been repulsed from St. Lucia, Admiral Byron arrived in the West Indies, with such reinforcements as gave the English fleet the superiority, and which determined the commander to attempt the blockade of Fort Royal, where the French ships had rendezvoused.

But as a large English convoy was then ready to sail for England, Admiral Byron sailed part way with it, with his fleet ; the result being the capture of St. Vincent and Granada, by the French under D'Estaing. . . .

It was now considered impossible to oppose M. d'Estaing, and a general panic spread through all the British islands. The French admiral, however, contented himself with returning the visits he had formerly received at Martinico, by parading for a whole day in sight of St. Christopher's. He afterwards waited to see the French homeward-bound

West-India convoy clear of danger, and then proceeded, with about 22 sail-of-the-line and 10 frigates, to the coast of North America."

This was doubtless the fleet in which Josephine sailed for France in 1779, and after this attention unwittingly bestowed upon the future Empress of the French, the gallant admiral sailed to the assistance of the Americans.

1780—Rodney's engagement with the French Admiral Guichen, off Fort Royal. . . . Sir G. B. Rodney's letter to the Admiralty. . . .

"SANDWICH, FORT ROYAL BAY, MARTINICO, April 26, 1780.

"Since acquainting their lordships of my arrival at Barbadoes and Saint Lucia, and taking upon me the command of his Majesty's ships in that station, the enemy, who had paraded for several days before St. Lucia, with 25 ships of the line, and 8 frigates full of troops, and were in hopes of surprising the island, were disappointed in their views by the good disposition of the troops by General Vaughan, and of the ships by Rear-Admiral Parker. They retired into Fort Royal Bay, a few hours before my arrival at Gros-Ilet Bay, on the 27th of March.

"As soon as the fleet could be possibly got ready, I determined to return their visit, and offer them battle ; and accordingly, on the 2d of April, proceeded with the whole fleet off Fort Royal Bay, where for two days I offered the enemy battle; the fleet being near enough to count their guns, and at times within random-shot of some of their forts. M. de Guichen, notwithstanding his superior numbers, chose to remain in port. . . . In this situation both fleets remained till the 15th inst., when the enemy, with their whole force, put to sea in the middle of the night ; immediate notice of which being given me, I followed them ; and having looked into Fort Royal Bay, and the road of St. Pierre, on the 16th we got sight of them, about eight leagues to the leeward of Pearl Rock. A general chase to the N. W.

followed, and at five in the evening we plainly discovered that they consisted of 23 sail-of-the-line, one 50 gun-ship, 3 frigates, a lugger and a cutter. . . . When night came I found the fleet in line-of-battle ahead, and ordered the "Venus" and "Greyhound" to keep between his Majesty's and the enemy's fleet, to watch their motions, which was admirably well done by that good and veteran officer, Captain Ferguson. The maneuvers of the enemy during the night indicated a wish to avoid battle; but I was determined they should not, and therefore counteracted all their motions. . . .

"At eleven, next morning, I made the signal to prepare for battle, and at eleven-fifty the signal for every ship to bear down and steer for her opposite in the enemy's line, agreeably to the 21st article of the additional fighting instructions. Five minutes later I made the signal for battle; a few minutes after, the signal that it was my intention to engage close, and of course the Admiral's ship to be the example. A few minutes before one P. M., one of the headmost ships began the action; at one, the "Sandwich," in the center, after having received several fires from the enemy, began to engage. I repeated the signal for close action. The action in the center continued till four, when M. Guichen, in the "Couronne," in which they had mounted ninety guns, the "Triumphant" and the "Fendant," after engaging the "Sandwich" for an hour and a half, bore away. . . . At the conclusion of the battle, the enemy may be said to be completely beaten; but such was the distance of the van from the rear, and the crippled condition of several ships, particularly of the "Sandwich," which for twenty-four hours was with difficulty kept above water, that it was impossible to pursue them that night without the greatest disadvantage. . . . To prevent the risk of another action they took shelter under Guadeloupe. . . . As I found it was in vain to follow them, with his Majesty's fleet in the condition they were in, and every motion of the enemy indicating their

intention of getting into Fort-Royal Bay, Martinico, where alone they could repair their shattered fleet, I thought the only chance of bringing them to action again was to be off Fort Royal before them, where the fleet under my command now is, in daily expectation of their arrival. . . .

"I cannot conclude without acquainting their lordships that the French admiral, who appeared to be a brave and gallant officer, had the honor to be nobly supported during the whole action. "G. B. RODNEY."

In this action 120 men were killed and 353 wounded on board the English fleet. Admiral Rodney's action was indecisive, as much from the plan of attack ordered, as he says, by the 21st article of the additional fighting instructions, as from any other reason. The improved plan of attack, which Nelson adopted at Trafalgar, was not then used. . . .

This battle had an important bearing upon operations in America, it would seem, for "M. de Guichen's fleet was so disabled by its service in the West Indies, that instead of proceeding to North America, as was intended, he made the best of his way with a convoy to Cadiz, to the great disappointment of General Washington."

Admiral Rodney, being aware of the enemy's designs against New York, as soon as he had received certain information of de Guichen's departure, himself sailed immediately with eleven sail-of-the-line and four frigates, to New York, and thus, in all probability saved his fleet from being disabled by the hurricane which did such tremendous damage among the islands.

V.

1775. "The sympathy of the West Indian colonists with the revolutionary movement in America, is well illustrated by the petition of the Assembly of Jamaica, to his Majesty

in favor of the Americans. After professing the greatest loyalty to the mother country, they declare that the most dreadful calamities to their island, and the inevitable destruction of the small sugar colonies, must follow the present unnatural contest with the Americans. They denied that their ancestors, the settlers or conquerors of the colonies, could receive any rights or privileges from their fellow-subjects in England, at the time of their immigration; the peers could not communicate their privileges, and the people had no rights but those of which the former were equally possessed; but the Crown, whose prerogatives were totally independent of both for the great purposes of colonization, communicated to all the colonies, though in different degrees, a liberal share of its own royal powers of government. These powers, as well as their original rights and privileges, had been confirmed to them, by every means which could be devised for affording security to mankind: charters, proclamations, prescription, compact, protection, and obedience. From these and other premises, the petitioners declare that the colonists are not the subjects of the people of England, and insist that they have their own rights of legislation; they deplore, and behold with amazement, a plan almost carried into execution, for reducing the colonies into an abject state of slavery; and they demand and claim from the sovereign, as the guarantee of their just rights, that no law shall be forced upon them injurious to their rights, as colonists or Englishmen; and that, as the common parent of his people, his Majesty would become a mediator between his European and American subjects.

"The West Indian planters, in a petition to the House of Commons, stated that British property then in the West Indies amounted to upwards of $150,000,000; that a further property of many millions was employed in the commerce created by the said islands; and that the whole produce

ultimately centered in Great Britain. They showed that the sugar plantations were necessarily dependent upon external support, and that the profits arising from the island in a great measure depended on a free intercourse with North America, from whence they were furnished with the necessaries for the maintenance of their plantations."

This feeling of sympathy was universal throughout the West Indies, the trade of which was extensive with the American colonies.

An instance of the manner in which England took reprisal for an alleged violation of the laws of neutrality, is given in the history of the island of St. Eustatius, belonging to the Dutch. In 1777, Sir Joseph Yorke, the English ambassador at the Hague, delivered a memorial to the States-General, in which he declared that the King, his master, had borne with unexampled patience the irregular conduct of the subjects of their High-Mightinesses, in their colony of St. Eustatia, which was carrying on an illicit trade with America. He stated that the governor of St. Eustatia, M. Van Graaf, had permitted the seizure of an English vessel by an American privateer, within cannon-shot of the island ; and that he had returned, from the fortress of his government, the salute of a rebel flag. . . .

(This is said on good authority, to have been the first salute paid the American flag in a foreign port.)

Therefore, in his Majesty's name, and by his express order, he demanded from their High-Mightinesses a formal disavowal of the salute by Fort Orange, at St. Eustatia, to the rebel ship, and the immediate recall of the governor.

The States answered by a counter memorial, complaining of the menacing tone of the English court, and disavowing, in the most express manner, any act or mark of honor, which may have been given by their officers to any vessels belonging to the colonies of America, so far as it might have implied a recognition of American independence.

The English ministry said they were satisfied with this, yet, the English manifesto against Holland, dated December 20th, 1780, contained the following assertion : . . . "In the West Indies, particularly at St. Eustatius, every protection and assistance has been given to our rebellious subjects. Their privateers are openly received into the Dutch harbors, allowed to refit there, supplied with arms and ammunition, their crews recruited, their prizes bought in and sold ; and all this in violation of as clear and solemn stipulation as can be made. This conduct, so inconsistent with all good faith, so repugnant to the wisest part of the Dutch nation, is chiefly to be ascribed to the prevalence of the leading merchants of Amsterdam, whose secret correspondence with our rebellious subject was suspected long before it was made known by the fortunate discovery of a treaty with them, signed in September, 1778." . . .

The ninth of August, preceding, an English squadron had seized some American vessels under the fort of St. Martin's, and threatened to destroy the town if the Dutch made any resistance. The States-General protested solemnly against this violation of their territory, and desired full satisfaction. . . .

The next link in this chain of events, was forged by Sir George Rodney, who returned from New York with his squadron, the latter part of the year 1780. This rapacious sea-dog had long had his eye upon the rich island of St. Eustatius, and in February, 1781, he and General Vaughan appeared before it, with a summons to the governor to surrender. M. de Graaf, the governor, was then ignorant of the rupture between England and Holland, and at first could not believe that the officer who carried the summons was serious ; but he answered, that being incapable of making any defense, against such a force, he must of necessity surrender it ; only recommending the inhabitants to the known and usual clemency of British commanders.

The value of the plunder amounted to above $15,000,000, which Rodney confiscated to the crown. This was exclusive of the shipping then in port, some 250 sail, many richly laden, a Dutch 38-gun frigate, and five smaller vessels of war. All the magazines were bursting with stores, and even the beach covered with tobacco and sugar.

It was claimed by Rodney, in his defense for attacking a defenseless island before the government was aware of the beginning of hostilities, that it was a nest of smugglers and privateers, and that the American war would have long since been terminated if the rebels had not received assistance from this same island of St. Eustatius. General Vaughan wrote, on the 7th of February, "We took possession of at least 3,000,000 pounds sterling of money. . . . We have continued the Dutch flag, which answers extremely well, as there have been no less than 17 ships come into the port since it was captured."

"Except for warlike stores, St. Eustatius became one of the greatest auctions that was ever opened in the universe. Invitation was given and protection afforded to purchasers of all nations, and of all sorts. Never was a better market for buyers."

But the inhabitants were entirely ruined. The island has never recovered from this base attack; to-day its ruins testify to the complete devastation at the hands of Rodney and Vaughan.

In this manner had England wreaked her revenge upon another nation for its alleged part in the defense of the American colonies.

Defeated in America, her fleets resorted to the West Indies, where they vented the spleen of their commanders first upon the Dutch and then the French.

At this time the Count de Grasse was expected in the West-Indies, with a large fleet, and in April the British squadron under Sir Samuel Hood fell in with the French,

off Martinique. But the French Admiral avoided an engagement and preserved his forces for the capture of Tobago, which soon followed.

The ever-alert governor-general of the French Antilles, the Marquis de Bouillé, learning that St. Eustatius was feebly garrisoned by its British conquerors, hastily invaded and captured it, without the loss of a man.* The French restored to the Dutch governor his own private property, and confiscated some 2,000,000 francs, said to have been appropriated by Admiral Rodney and General Vaughan. Saba and St. Bartholomew also fell to the French, and later, St. Christopher's, the activity and energy of Bouillé and De Grasse proving more than the English could successfully combat.

The reprehensible conduct of Rodney and Vaughan were brought to the notice of the British Parliament, and made a subject of official inquiry. Mr. Burke moved that their

*Bouillé, François Claude Amour, Marquis de, French general, born Nov. 19, 1739. "Distinguished himself in the Seven Years' War, was appointed governor of Guadeloupe in 1768, and at the beginning of the American war of independence was governor-general of the French West Indies. He not only preserved them to his country, but took several others from the English, fighting with constant and desperate valor. At the same time he displayed such magnanimity that, on visiting England, at the conclusion of peace, he was received with admiration. In the first years of the revolution he was in command of the eastern military division of France, and ably contended with great difficulties arising from the rebellious disposition of the population and the mutinous spirit of the troops. When Louis XVI. projected his flight from France, he consulted Bouillé, who entered into the plan and made all the necessary preparations ; but which were rendered futile by the arrest of the king at Varennes (June 21, 1791). Bouillé fled from France, and went afterwards to Russia, later to England, where he wrote his *Mémoires sur la Revolution Française ;* London, 1797 ; first published in French, 1801. He died Nov. 14th, 1800."

actions were dishonest ; but his motion was rejected, by a vote of 163 89.

The fleets of the French and English admirals chased each other to and fro across the Atlantic, now in the West Indies, now on the coast of North America. In June, the Marquis de Bouillé and Count de Grasse united in an expedition to Tobago, which island they captured with little loss, while Rodney's fleet was at Barbados, within twenty-four hours' sail. The Count afterwards sailed for America, and his participation in the affairs at Yorktown is a matter of history universally known. The French contributed to that memorable investment by which Cornwallis was forced to surrender, and the British arms suffered permanent defeat on American soil, 37 ships and 7,000 men. The last of November he arrived in the West-Indies, and it was in anticipation of this event that Rear-Admiral Hood left Sandy-Hook, on the 11th November, arriving at Barbados the 5th of December, with 17 sail of the line.

1782.—In January, the Marquis de Bouillé, landed at St. Christopher's, with 8,000 men, supported by de Grasse with 29 sail of the line. After the French troops had effected a landing, the Count was attacked by Sir Samuel Hood, and a desperate naval battle ensued, in which the advantage remained with the French. Sir Samuel withdrew his fleet to Barbados, and the French effected the conquest of the island. The near islands of Nevis and Montserrat shared in the downfall of St. Christopher's, and, of all the British possessions in the Antilles, at the opening of the year 1782, but three islands, Antigua, Barbados and Jamaica, remained to them.

It was a critical time ; the supremacy of Britain in the West-Indies was in danger of being wrested from her, through the bravery and activity of the Marquis de Bouillé and the Count de Grasse. Only by a supreme effort, and

by means of one of the greatest naval battles of the century, was her prestige restored.

The Naval Battle between Rodney and the Count de Grasse.—Sir George Rodney, with 12 sail of the line, arrived at Barbados, the 19th of February ; Admiral Hood three days later, and also three sail of the line from England. This made Rodney's fleet to consist of 36 sail of the line, with which he cruised to windward of the French islands, hoping to intercept an expected convoy from France.

The convoy escaped and arrived safely at Fort Royal, so Rodney returned to Gros-Ilet Bay, St. Lucia, to water his fleet and refit.

In Fort Royal Bay, across the channel, in Martinique, was the fleet of Count de Grasse, consisting of 34 sail of the line, including the magnificent "Ville de Paris," of 110 guns, his flag-ship ; two fifty-gun ships and 13 frigates.

At daybreak on the 8th of April, the French fleet, with a large convoy under its protection, sailed out of Fort-Royal, with the intention of forming a junction with the Spanish fleet at Hispaniola and Cuba.

The object of their destination and attack was Jamaica, and aboard the fleet were 5,500 troops.

Rodney, on the alert for the enemy, at once sailed in pursuit, and just before nightfall sighted them under the island of Dominica. At daylight next morning, the English fleet was becalmed under that island, but the morning breeze soon enabled the van of the fleet to close with the French center. The action was commenced about nine, by Captain Burnet in the "Royal Oak," seconded by the "Alfred," and the "Montague.". . . Then began, on the morning of the ninth of April, that decisive and most sanguinary battle, which decided the fate of the French in the Antilles. . . . The whole division was soon engaged. The British van brought to, that it might not be too far separated from the rest of the fleet ; but the French kept under sail, and when they

had passed the foremost of their opponents tacked, in succession, and formed again in the rear, continuing this mode of attack. Thus eight sail of the British were engaged by fifteen of the enemy, until the center were able to come into the action. Sir George Rodney, with his seconds, the "Namur," and the "Duke," all ninety-gun ships, obliged de Grasse to keep at a greater distance during the remainder of the engagement, which continued for nearly two hours afterwards. About twelve, de Grasse stood off to windward and two of his fleet were obliged to put into Guadeloupe. That night the English fleet lay to, to repair damages, and the next day both fleets kept turning to windward, in the channel between Dominica and Guadeloupe.

On the eleventh the enemy had weathered the island of Guadeloupe, and might have escaped, had not two of the disabled ships fallen astern, and de Grasse gallantly borne down with his whole fleet to their assistance. This rendered a general attack unavoidable, and both fleets were kept in close order during the night. . . . About seven next morning, the hostile fleets met on opposite tacks. Admiral Drake's division led into action ; the English ships ranging slowly up and closely under the enemy's lee, so that every shot told with terrible effect. About noon, of the twelfth, Rodney, in the "Formidable," with the "Namur," "Duke," and "Canada," bore directly, with all sail, athwart the enemy's line, and broke through it, about three ships from the center, where de Grasse commanded, in the "Ville de Paris." Then Rodney, followed by the ships astern of his division, wore short around; thus doubling upon the enemy, and closing up with their center, completed the separation of the line, and decided the fortune of the day. At the time Rodney wore, he made the signal for the van to tack, which was immediately done by Admiral Drake. The French van bore up, endeavoring to

form their broken line ; but the dismay and disorder of their rear was irretrievable.

The "Ville de Paris," after being much battered, was closely engaged by the "Canada," for nearly two hours ; but would not strike, until the "Barfleur," Sir Samuel Hood, came up; her she engaged for about a quarter of an hour ; and then, at sunset, she surrendered.

When the "Ville de Paris," struck, there were only three unwounded men upon her upper deck,—the Count de Grasse was one of the three. . . .

The French fleet was reported to have had 3,000 men killed and wounded. On board the "Ville de Paris," alone 400 were said to have been killed. Thirty-six chests of money were found on board her. This great ship was a present from the city of Paris to Louis XV. and was supposed to have cost 176,000 pounds sterling ; she was "the first first-rate man-of-war ever taken and carried into port by any commander of any nation."

Five sail of the French line were taken, but the most of them escaped, owing to the English fleet getting becalmed under the lee of Guadeloupe. . . . The English loss amounted to 250 killed and 1050 wounded, including Capt. Blair, of the "Anson," Lord Robert Manners, and Capt. Bayne of the "Alfred." The whole of the battering-cannon and artillery intended for the attack on Jamaica was on board the captured ships. Had the Count de Grasse succeeded in joining the Spanish fleet, the naval force of the two crowns would have amounted to sixty sail of the line upon that station.

Jamaica was saved, the back of the French fleet broken, and the prizes taken into the harbor of Fort Royal, Jamaica. But the finest of the prizes, including the "Ville de Paris," were lost in a terrible gale, in the summer of that year, 1782.

The brave De Grasse, who had so ably assisted the Ameri-

cans, and by whose active co-operation, Cornwallis was shut up at Yorktown, the year previous, was made captive by the English admiral, and the British fleet was at last triumphant.

He survived this defeat six years, and died in January, 1788.

VI.

Witchcraft:—In the year 1657, a woman was burned for witchcraft who, says the historian Du Tertre, was undoubtedly guilty. "For it was proved that the moment she touched children against whom she had a grudge, they became languid and died. She sent a sort of caterpillar to the houses of those with whom she quarrelled, which destroyed the best of everything they had, while their neighbors did not suffer from the pest. She was brought before a judge, who put her in irons and examined her for the marks which he had heard the devil puts upon his own; but not finding such he delivered her into the hands of a surgeon who proceeded to apply the test by water, said to be efficacious in Germany.

"They carried her to a river of some depth, near to Carbet, where they stripped her, tied her thumbs to her great toes, and having fastened a rope to her waist, she was pushed into the water and hauled to the deepest part, where she floated like a balloon, without their being able to sink her, although she herself made several efforts to go to the bottom. More than two hundred persons were present at this trial, and would have gone away convinced; but her tormentor sent a little boy to swim to her, who, having fastened a sewing-needle in her hair, she sank like lead to the bottom, where for the space of a good '*miserere*,' they saw her motionless. Yet, when they took her out of the water, they were obliged to give her something to quench her thirst. . . . These three circumstances: of not being able to sink without

a little bit of iron attached, and of being under water without breathing, and without swallowing any water, determined the judge to condemn her to death next day. But during the night her self-constituted judge, proceeding with his plan, burnt her so severely upon the sides and flank, that she died the same night, without having confessed the crime of which she was accused."

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